



Art of Pure Devotion

By
His Divine Grace
Srila Bhakti Promode Puri Goswami Maharaj

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ALL GLORIES TO SRI GURU AND SRI GAURANGA

Art of Pure Devotion



This book is dedicated to our beloved spiritual master Nitya-lila-pravista Om Visnupad Srimad Bhakti Promode Puri Goswami Maharaja in meditation on his loving instructions. Gaura-Purnima, 2000.



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ART OF PURE DEVOTION



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INTRODUCTION

In this book, I have attempted to imprint conscientiously some basic areas of devotional conclusions, (*siddhanta*) which My most worshipping spiritual master, nitya lila pravista Om Vishnupada His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Promode Puri Goswami Maharaj, used to often stress in His various dialogues with devotees. Simple though it may seem to those who are somewhat conversant with scriptural lore, these deliberations can project manifold deeper purports and the only resort to clear the maze of such apparently opposing conclusions is solely the mercy of the spiritual master, pure devotees and the Supreme Lord by implicit obedience to them.

For example, in regard to guru-tattva the apparently simple idea of the guru-principle that was understood in initial stages by many has now seemed to take a broader spectrum. Nonetheless, as Srila Gurudev points out in his first essay on the reminiscences of his spiritual master that on the event of even a little doubt or neglect surfacing on the part of the disciple towards the bona fide guru, immediately all of the disciple's devotional practices ceases to have any effect. In other words, devotion to the spiritual master is solely the criteria for one's ability to ascertain spiritual truths. In the first topic titled reminiscences of Sri Srila Prabhupada, Srila Gurudeva had enlightened us on the mood of real separation to the spiritual master, which can only manifest if the disciple uses his mind, body and words, in the assimilation and pure practice of the spiritual master's divine instructions that would inevitably warrant the causeless mercy of the Lord. To delve into those very

basic instructions is the humble origin of this book, which has been formulated to increase the mood of separation from our worshippable spiritual master.

In his essay on Lord Gaura Sundara, the truth of Sriman Mahaprabhu as the Supreme Lord Himself has been discussed. In the teachings of Sriman Mahaprabhu, a simple outline of the principles of knowledge (*sambandha*), practice (*abhideya*) and the goal (*prayojana*) has been outlined. Furthur in connection with the basis, *sambandha* or linking knowledge, Sriman Mahaprabhu has clarified many intricate and fine conclusions regarding the nature of the living entity and his relationships with both the material nature and the Supreme Lord. Further, He exhorted all to accept the shelter of the bona fide guru for attaining self-realization. The *Srimad Bhagavatam* declares:

*nrdeham adyam sulabham sudurlabham
plavam sukalpam gurukarnadharam
mayanukulyena nabhasvateritam
puman bhavabdhim na taret sa atmaha*

"After many births of wandering in this material universe through different bodies, by some rare good fortune one has been awarded this invaluable human body which can be compared to a boat that can take us across the ocean of transmigration. The spiritual master is compared as the captain to guide this boat across the seemingly insurmountable material ocean to the spiritual world. To combat the tempests or storms that may assail this boat on its dangerous journey is the favorable propelling wind in the form of the causeless mercy of the Supreme Lord."

In short, those even having all such opportunities to cross the ocean of transmigration but are neglectful in this regard are to be considered killers of their soul.

Our worshipable spiritual master in his various essays in the defense of pure devotion would often quote from the *Srimad Bhagavatam* commentaries of Srila Visvanatha Chakravarti

Thakur as above. He possessed an incredible memory power being able to quote from many scriptures when then occasion arose. Especially, the verses of the Sri Chaitanya Charitamrita by Srila Krishnadas Kaviraj Goswami and Sri Chaitanya Bhagavata were dear to Him and would often quote from these books in the delineation of some of the esoteric pastimes of Sriman Mahaprabhu.

His Divine Grace had always urged all in developing an attraction for the Holy name, while at the same time cultivating the qualities of meekness and humility as exemplified in the teachings of Lord Chaitanya rather than strive to venture blindly into high confidential devotional mellows. The essay on the glories of the Holy Name is written with reference to the authorized scriptures. Regarding such glories, Srila Gurudeva often quotes from Srila Bhaktivinoda's compositions:

*isat vikasi punah dekhaya nija rupa guna
citta hari laya krsna pasa*

"One who performs devotion completely free from all duplicity and becomes completely surrendered to the Holy Name, gradually the Holy Name personified will award all perfections while bringing one to the highest platform."

In connection with the need of increased enthusiasm for chanting the holy name of the Lord, Srila Gurudeva narrates an excerpt of the childhood pastimes of Lord Krishna taken from the *Srimad Bhagavatam*. Once, mother Yasoda attempted to tie baby Krishna to a wooden mortar because of His extremely naughty childhood pranks in the local vicinity. To her amazement, she found that no matter how much rope was used to bind the child, it always turned out to be short by the measure of two fingers. At last, Sri Krishna on witnessing the weary, perspiring condition of His mother gave in and allowed Himself to be bound. Srila Visvanath Cakravarti comments that initially, the internal potency *yogamaya* prevented mother Yasoda from tying Sri Krishna altogether, keeping the rope short by the length

of two fingers to be able to continually facilitate the Lord's childhood pastimes. Finally, in the end after Sri Krishna witnessed His mother's persistent struggle, His heart softened and He allowed Himself to be bound by the action of His causeless mercy potency (*krpa-sakti*). In this context, the two fingers of rope that was lacking represents firstly, the necessity of the sincere endeavor of every individual devotee in his devotional practices and secondly the causeless mercy of the Sri Krishna, which is surely bestowed on His witnessing the faithful, painstaking attempts of the devotee. These two factors were instrumental for Sri Krishna to allow Himself to be tied.

Srila Gurudeva states that one important truth that can be ascertained from this episode is that although Sriman Mahaprabhu had instructed us all to take up chanting one lakh of Holy Names daily, if we fail to make the proper effort and simply beg for mercy in a pretentious way that will not find favor with the Supreme Lord! At least all spiritual candidates have to make an effort to chant 25,000 names daily for their progress in spiritual life. Our worshipping divine master had always requested many inquisitive seekers to try to develop a genuine attraction to the holy name rather than trying to indulge in the unauthorized discussions on the confidential subject matters.

In every single aspect of Srila Gurudeva's life he showed the model example of carrying out the dual functions of practice and preaching. For instance, in addition to his minimum schedule of chanting one-lakh rounds he would constantly engage in writing many spiritual essays for propagating the divine message of Sriman Mahaprabu. His innumerable nectarine essays on record is the very proof of this. He was very proficient in the art of deity worship. Being of high descent deity worship always had played an important role in his life from childhood. He was always very painstaking in every feature of such worship also having participated in installing the deities of various maths. In fact, Srila Gurudeva would laughingly tell us that at one time collecting ancient sacred books and deity forms of the Lord was his second nature.

On sacred occasions such as the appearance day of Supreme Lord Krishna or other divine incarnations, He would remain strictly fasting the whole day while performing the bathing ceremony or conducting the appropriate fire sacrifice for the occasion. He has assured all who have implicit faith in his divine instructions and were willing to undertake the life of submission and surrender to the Supreme Lord that they will surely be able to cross over the material coverings. I pray to my most worshipping spiritual master that he may bless this unqualified servant of his so that he can always remain at all times entrenched in the service of the spiritual master, the Vaishnavas and the Supreme Lord.

Sri-guru kṛpā hi kevalam

Your servant in the service of Sri
Guru & Gauranga
Bhakti Saran Damodara

*tad vag visargo janatagha viplavo
yasmin prati -slokaṁ abaddhavarāpi
namany anantasya yaso' nkitāni yat
smṛvanti gayanti gṛhṇanti sadhavaḥ*

The literature which describes the glories of the Supreme Lord is directed to change the impious lives of the worldly people. Even though irregularly composed, it is accepted, heard and sung by the saintly people.



His Divine Grace
Sri Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakur
Prabhupada

REMINISCENCES OF SRI SRILA PRABHUPADA

By His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Promode Puri
Goswami Maharaja



Our most beloved spiritual master His Divine Grace Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur entered into his eternal, divine pastimes at the age of 63 in the last duration (*nisanta-lila*) of Thursday, Krishna Caturdasi tithi on December 31, 1936. Normal calculation would infer that he left at early hours (5:30a.m.) of the morning on Friday. Presently, 32 years have elapsed since his disappearance. Gradually, one by one all of his surrendered disciples have attained the transcendental world, achieving their proper position in his association and others still present are biding their time as to also attain the state of final beatitude where they can be in close proximity to their beloved spiritual master.

Two months before his final disappearance, the most worshippable Srila Prabhupada had visited Sri Purushottam Dham. There in the place called Catak Parvat, which was his place of practicing solitary devotions, he had cautioned his disciples to be vigilant, informing them to perform their devotions without any hypocrisy as there would be very little time left in this world.

We noted that he would often recite prayers in praise of Govardhan hill composed by Srila Rupa Goswami and those of Srila Raghunath Das Goswami namely, "*prayasam me tvam kuru govardhan purnam*" and "*nija nikate nivasam dehi govardhan tvam*". At that very place of Chatak Parvat, Sriman Mahaprabhu used

to view the hill situated there as Govardhan hill and the blue waters of the neighbouring ocean as the Yamuna river while the surrounding lush green forests located were considered as the groves of Vrndavan itself. Sri Gaurasundar in the sentiments of Srimati Radharani had wept intensely in His separation from Krishna in His residence at Puri crying out:

*kanha mora pranānath muralivadan
kanha karon kanha pan vrajendranandan
kaharo kahibo keva jane mora dukha
vrajendranandan bina phate mora buka*

“Where is the Lord of my life, where is the flute player! Where can I go to find the son of Nanda! To whom can I relate my sorrow? My heart is bursting in lamentation without Him.”

Likewise, Srila Prabhupada, with tears brimming from his eyes, would be intensely absorbed in chanting these couplets in loving separation at Chatak Parvat.

He conducted successive festivals, which included the worship of Govardhana Hill, the appearance day of Madhavacharya, and the disappearance of Srila Gaurakishore Das at that location. Some people were of the opinion that the eulogies of Govardhana Hill originally composed by Srila Rupa and Raghunath were the very compositions by which he used to worship the same hill. Some time before his arrival in Puri, he had come to Mathura from Calcutta where he had strictly observed the Purushottam vow in Mathura at his residence called 'Sivalaya'. There he spent his time constantly chanting the Holy Name in a God-intoxicated state and would go daily to Madhumangal Kunj in Vrndavan where he would deliver inspiring discourses based on the *Srimad Bhagavatam*. It was at that time Srila Prabhupada began to reveal Govardhana Hill as an ideal place for performing one's devotions.

On the October 17, 1934, Srila Prabhupada, with all the devotees, began to follow the monthly Kartik vow consonant

with the practice of hearing and chanting of the pastimes of Sri Krishna throughout that period. On October 29, he revealed the place in the village of Sadighara where Srila Rupa Goswami had obtained the vision of the deity of Gopal. On the first of November, while touring all the historically significant places of Vraja, he described the coinciding sweet pastimes of Krishna in great emotion.

On the appearance day of Sri Madhvacharya in 1932, Srila Prabhupada, accompanied by a large number of devotees, began to embark on a complete tour of Vraja Mandala by foot. At each and every spot where Sri Krishna enacted His pastimes he would himself, by walking tirelessly towards that particular site, proceed to describe the pastimes of Lord Hari. At the confluence of the two holy ponds Radha Kund and Syama Kund he expounded the commentary of Srila Rupa Goswami's *Upadesamrta* in the Hindi vernacular. By the side of Lalita Kunda too, he engaged fully in disseminating the science of devotion to all present. At that time massive tents were pitched to accommodate the numerous enthusiastic people. Later, a photograph depicting him engaged in preaching to the masses appeared in the current weekly '*Gaudiya*'.

The month of October 1935 was especially significant as an auspicious period in which he would regularly lecture in observance of the Damodara vow on such holy books as the *Upanishads*, *Chaitanya Charitamrita* and *Srimad Bhagavatam*. Then he would carry out activities such as the circumambulation of the holy kunds including meditating daily on the periodic divine pastimes of Krishna (*asta-kaliya smaran*). It was at this time that he formally inaugurated the Vraja Mandala Publicity Committee to render various services to this holy area of Vraja.

The fourth of November marked the official opening of the Kunja Bihari Math in Radha Kunda where he officially installed the deities of Sri Sri Radha-Krishna and Lord Gauranga. Later, on the following 6th of November he established the puspā

samadhi of Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur on the banks of the Radha Kunda called Sri Vraja Svananda Sukhada kunja.

The life and soul of Srila Prabhupada was Srimati Radharani and Sri Radha Kund. Describing the glories of Srimati Radharani and Her extraordinary mercy would make him virtually lose himself in the bliss of loving separation. The especially poignant verse from *Rasa Suddha Niddhi* of Srila Prabhodananda would cause a profuse stream of tears to flow from his eyes and his throat to tremble.

*yasya kadapi vasananchalakhelano-tha
dhanya-atidhanya-pavanena krtarthamani
yogindradurgam-agatir madhusudano 'pi
tasya namostu vrsbhanu-bhuvo diso 'pi*

"I offer my obeisances to the direction where Srimati Radharani is situated, whose fluttering of cloth causes a slight gust of wind which, when experienced by the same Krishna who is sought after arduously by the great sages in meditation, causes Him to become very blissful and because of this He even considers Himself most fortunate."

The work called *Vilapkusumanjali* was much relished by him. We also often heard him relish the verses embodying the esoteric conjugal loving pastimes of Sri Krishna like *Gopi-gita* and *Brahma-gita* together with *Srila Rupa-Raghunath Stava Mala*. Srila Prabhupada had commented from Srila Rupa Goswami's *Upadesamrta*, "More superior to Vaikuntha is the township of Mathura where Lord Sri Hari took His birth, higher than this is the land of Vrndavana where He engaged in His divine sports. In this regard comparatively higher is the mountain Govardhana Hill, while the most superexcellent of all places is Radha Kund, being able to afford the quintessence of devotion. If anyone rejects this unique place and seeks other places for conducting their devotions is said to be most ignorant. Srimati Radharani is recognised as the most devoted to the Supreme Lord and Her kund has been eulogized in the pure scriptures. The practice of

pure devotion is impenetrable to even saints like Narada Muni, what to speak of ordinary souls! The person who bathes in Radha Kunda will ultimately be able to obtain perfection in conjugal mellows achieving the lotus feet of Srimati Radharani. Srila Prabhupada vouches that his bath in the divine kund will be made possible on the sole condition of Srimati Radharani accepting him among Her entourage." (Devotees in our line are careful only to sprinkle water from this holy kund on their heads)

In perusal of such explanations Srila Prabhupada could not keep His heartfelt experiences secret as he reveals below.

*tvanchet kṛpam mayi vidhasyasi naiva kim me
pranair vraje na ca karoru vakarina pi'*

(Vilapkusumanjali)

The meaning of this verse aptly expresses the choice of his name as one most devoted to Srimati Radharani for the service of Krishna and it means "Oh Radhe! If you do not give me mercy than what is the use of keeping my life? What else is the use of staying in Vraja? Oh Karoru! Being bereft of your association, I do not desire even for the association of Lord Krishna."

Srila Prabhupada used to see the birthplace of Lord Chaitanya, Yoga Pith, as the original Gokula Mahavana. He understood the place Srivasa Angan, where congregational chanting had been blissfully performed, to be none other than Vrindavan, and Chandrasekhar Bhavan was realized as Govardhana Hill. At that very place only did he construct a hut for performing his devotions and he envisioned the small pond near to that hut to be Radha Kund.

In 1899, in that same hut he performed severe austerities under the vow of Caturmasya where he cooked havisyanna with his own hand (a boiled mixture of rice and dhal with a tincture of ghee) reputed to be spiritually invigorating and would eat this from the bare ground! Similarly, he would sleep on the floor giving up all necessary paraphernalia like mattresses and pillows.

Srila Prabhupada showed incredible tenacity by observing the lifelong vow of celibacy from childhood. In 1901, in the month of Magha he took initiation from the great saint Srila Gaura Kishore Das Goswami under the advice of Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur. In 1905, he began to chant three lakhs of Holy Names daily in an unbroken manner, trudging the path of the great soul Srila Haridas Thakur with the view of completing 1,000 million Holy Names. In the year 1909, he began to exhibit great vigor in the execution of his devotional practices in Chandrasekhar Bhavan after the construction of his hut there was complete with the pond by its side recognized as Radha Kund.

The years 1914 (Ausadh Amavasya) and 1915 (Utthana Ekadashi) consecutively marked the disappearance of the two stalwart acaryas Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur and Srila Gaura Kishore Das. Srila Prabhupad, in deep separation from them, being stationed in Yoga Pith at that time became torn with the greatest grief and day and night were spent crying out of unbearable grief at their departure. One night in a dream he beheld Sriman Mahaprabhu with His associates and other pure devotees behind them such as Sri Jagganath Das, Srila Bhaktivinoda, and Srila Gaura Kishore, all in the hall of the temple at Yoga Pith. Sriman Mahaprabhu consoled him telling him not to despair for all their blessings were upon him and instead to carry out preaching of His divine messages with enthusiasm and eventually money and manpower would not pose as a problem. On seeing this vision Srila Prabhupada was filled with new hope and energy.

In 1918, he accepted the renounced order of life in Sridham Mayapur (*Chandrasekhar Bhavan*) on the annual birthday celebrations of Lord Gauranga. This custom of taking the renounced order of life dates back to ancient times. All the scriptures like *Upanishads*, *Manu Samhita*, *Srimad Bhagavatam*, and *Mahabharata* give evidence of the existence of such an order. This is still currently in practice among the main disciplic successions like Ramanujacharya and others.

After embracing the renounced order for the next period of eighteen years till his disappearance, he with the utmost energy made provision for the construction of many Gaudiya temples and by many painstaking efforts initiated the revealing of many unmanifest holy places, as well as the establishment of many printing presses for the propagation of the divine messages through daily, weekly, and monthly periodicals in various languages together with reprinting of many original devotional treatises.

Throughout his whole life, he exhibited the model example of Vaishnava etiquette conjointly with engagement in the preaching of pure devotion in multifarious ways beginning with the glories of the Holy Name in accordance with the injunctions of Srīman Mahāprabhu.

Srīla Prabhupada exhibited a remarkable attraction for hearing the pastimes of Lord Hari. He would remain absorbed for hours on end and when reminded to take his meals he would express displeasure and would remark that if one fallen living entity could be rescued from the clutches of the material energy than we must be prepared to shed gallons of blood. Such sincerity of convictions would manifest in the event of his witnessing the deviant thought of any of his disciples by which he would appear sorely grief-stricken and tears would roll down to his chest.

To the agnostics and disbelievers he became adamant like a thunderbolt but when preaching loving devotion he would appear soft as a rose. At times when there was scarcity of funds among the inmates of the math he would immediately strive to send them necessary funds and any delay would cause him great anxiety. Srīla Prabhupada would become extremely worried upon hearing about the ill health or distress of some of his disciples. His paternal affection for his disciples was incomparable to that of millions of fathers and mothers together. Even on occasions of being overcome by grief, simply sitting in proximity to Srīla Prabhupada would miraculously cause all that sorrow to

disappear. His chiding was equally sweet. It would be an enviable event if Srila Prabhupada were to berate any of us then and the victim of the rebuke would be considered most fortunate. In fact, all of our service endeavours reached its pinnacle of perfection simply in being able to be rewarded with one appreciative loving glance from his benevolent face.

tomara sevaya dukha haya yata sei to parama sukha

One would become painfully grieved in not being able to perform service in accordance with the instructions of Srila Prabhupada. The sum total of our practices, meditation, austerities and recitation of prayers are service to Sri Guru. He is the beloved servitor of Sri Krishna and at that time to be able to get one of his kind glances would be the reward of all our spiritual efforts.

On some occasion, if Srila Prabhupada were to leave for some other destination we would all feel the pangs of separation and would wait anxiously for his return. Those days used to be most painful experiences, what to speak of the 32 years which have elapsed without his association! How I have endured all these years is beyond my understanding!

keno va achaye prana ki sukha lagiya

By the influence of offences to the Name my heart has become hardened like a thunderbolt so that I have become insensitive to bereavement. If there was any acute distress I could not have endured such a long time in separation. Oh, loving master! Please save your forlorn servant and give the shade of your lotus feet to this fallen wretched person as the servant of the servant. You assured this person that you would appear again and again if need be in order to deliver such a fallen soul. Oh! most compassionate spiritual master, please forgive whatever offences I have committed knowingly or unknowingly and give me the permanent shelter of your lotus feet. Some days before your disappearance I placed both of your lotus feet on my chest while

your compassionate eyes were gazing upon me. I am a fool ignorant of scripture, without even the basic understanding of what is right or wrong. Please shower your mercy upon me in order to make me your worthy instrument. Please make me aware of my own faults and as servant of the devotees, kindly grant me the qualification to serve you.

Sriman Mahaprabhu's remark to Murari Gupta is instructive in regard to the steady position of the surrendered disciple who is always obedient to the spiritual master and of the all-compassionate spiritual master who never lets such a servant slide away from him:

*sei bhakta dhanya ye na chade prabhur carana
sei prabhu dhanya ye na chade nija-jana*

My days are becoming numbered but still my higher consciousness has not been ignited. During the time of initiation you had given tulasi beads in my hand to be able to chant one lakh of Holy Names inoffensively but I am still ever neglectful of my beads. Some of my loving god brothers, through their own model example, had constantly warned me about this obtrusive fact but practically, I had never been attentive to carry it out. Attraction to the Holy Name seems impossible for I do not seem to even have the energy to take up the chanting. There seems to exist the possibility of my having committed grave offences to the spiritual master and the pure devotees such that I may have been cheated out of the mercy of the Holy Name. Oh Prabhupada! Please kindly give me strength to ward off the evil effects of the material energy by granting the attraction to the Holy Name.

As the scriptures proclaim that if Lord Hari is angry with an individual the spiritual master will be able to rescue him but if the spiritual master is angry with one then nobody can help him. Therefore in all respects our endeavour should be to please the spiritual master. One who with his mind, body, words, wealth and life strives to fulfill the orders of the spiritual master attains to the highest pinnacle of spiritual life. All the sinful, low, people

who do not obey the orders of the spiritual master will never be able to evade the royal road to hell. Therefore, Oh! most compassionate spiritual master, please somehow enable me to be free from all offences to you and your dear most servants, which may have been caused by me unknowingly. The *Hari Bhakti Vilas* states:

*yo mantra; sa guruḥ saksat yo guruḥ sa hariḥ smṛtaḥ
gururasya bhavet tustastasya tusto hariḥ svayam*

"The mantra personified is none other than the spiritual master and the spiritual master is declared by all the scriptures to be the Supreme Lord. The Supreme Lord too, then becomes satisfied with he who pleases the spiritual master."

*guru kṛṣṇa-rūpe haṁ sastrera pramāṇe
guru rūpe kṛṣṇa kṛpā karen bhakta-gaṇe*

The spiritual master is the external manifestation of the Supreme Lord. In this regard, Śrīla Prabhupada is also regarded as the merciful potency of the Lord. One week before his final disappearance he imparted some important instructions, which are of great value to those striving to increase their devotion, which should be deliberated upon by all aspirant followers with the greatest of seriousness.

1. Everyone should strive enthusiastically to preach the divine messages of Śrīla Rupa-Raghunātha. To be the dust of the unalloyed followers of Śrīla Rupa Goswami constitutes our highest aspiration.
2. We should all cooperate with one another under the direction of the spiritual master in order to satisfy the transcendental senses of the Supreme Lord. One should keep body and soul together by accepting some form of favorable occupation but only for the interest of devotional service for the pleasure of Lord Hari. Even in the face of overwhelming odds and adversities one should never give up devotion to the Supreme Lord.

3. In observing the majority of the people not taking to the divine service of the Lord Krishna one should neither lose enthusiasm nor give up one's own regulated practices such as hearing and chanting of the Lord's pastimes. Rather, one should become humbler than the straw in the street and more tolerant than the tree and take to the uninterrupted chanting of the Holy Name
4. Life after life my only aspiration is the dust of the lotus feet of Srila Rupa Goswami. The disciplic succession in the line of Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur can never be disrupted. All with the greatest enthusiasm should be ready to undertake the propagation of the pure devotional concepts outlined by Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur.
5. Whilst living in the material world we may have to face all types of difficulties but it is not our objective to seek to prevent such difficulties rather it is more important to understand how to cultivate our eternal spiritual consciousness while tolerating these temporary dualities.
6. In this material world we should have neither aversion nor attraction to any person for all so-called friendships or material relationships are temporary, instead we should establish the quest for spiritual realization as the real need of every one.
7. All should cooperatively try to obtain the qualification for the ultimate service of Srimati Radharani.
8. May the devotional teachings of Rupa Goswami flood the masses.
9. The Holy Name with its noted seven excellences should be cultivated by all and is never to be neglected at any cost for such attraction to the Name will guarantee all perfections.

10. One should preach the divine messages of Sri Rupa-Raghunath with the greatest enthusiasm in rigid obedience to their devout followers.

Oh, most worshipping Srila Prabhupada! The knowledge from your lotus lips is none other than sublime Vedic knowledge and may we be able to obediently pursue this without any duplicity. Further, may you instill in us proper intelligence, strength and bless us so that we can properly follow such instructions. We pray to be eternally secure under your protection.

After the disappearance of Lord Gaurasundar following the close of His divine pastimes and continuing on till the period of His successors like Sri Baladeva Vidyabhusana the preaching of the pure Vaisnava doctrine progressed without blemish. Unfortunately after that period even in the presence of many Vaishnava saints the so-called followers of the Vaishnava doctrine began to be influenced by an impersonalist outlook and many deviant disciplic successions began to manifest. These people by the force of speech and writing began to inculcate their own self-imposed ideas into the pure devotional doctrine causing it to break away from the principle codes.

Sriman Mahaprabhu never tolerated the slightest breach from the path of pure devotion, virtually seen in the agony He experienced from even slight negligence in practice—what to speak of gross overlapping of devotional mellows! (*rasa-abhasa*). Consequently, by the will of Sriman Mahaprabhu, the appearance of the successive illustrious acaryas who were in steadfast obedience to the line of thought of Sri Swarupa-Rupa brought great rejoicing to the simple-hearted devotees of the Lord. They were Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur and Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati. One Vaishnava has sung this couplet in regard to the glories of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur in regard to his reestablishment of the pure Vaishnava religion of pure devotion:

*suddha bhakti yata hata upadharma kavalita
heriyaya lokera mane trasa
hani susiddhanta-bana upadharma khana
khana -sajjanera badale ullasa*

These great leaders wrote innumerable commentaries on the main devotional treatises like *Bhagavatam*, *Chaitanya Charitamrita*, *Chaitanya Bhagavata*, enlightening the world in an incomparable way. Presently, the devotees feeling the loss of such great devotees cannot but weep in separation. What can be greater sorrow than this? The ritualistic performers cannot easily grasp the teachings of Sriman Mahaprabhu which are based exclusively on the tenets of pure devotion, devoid of all desire for material enjoyment to the extent of rejecting liberation from the material world in preference to the service of the Lord in the different mellows finally culminating in loving conjugal sentiments as exhibited by Srimati Radharani. In conclusion, due to the severe lack of those who can truly understand the outstanding contribution of these great souls only very few are genuinely in the mood of separation from them.

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur conducted his disappearance pastimes on June 23, 1918. Although I did not have the chance to meet him personally still inductively from the speeches of Srila Prabhupada and the many references to him in his books one can gain an intuitive insight into the great saint's uncommon character and prowess. Nevertheless, having taken shelter of Srila Prabhupada, I am humbled and unable to reveal all that I have experienced from my association with him in regard to his impeccable conduct and lofty stature and cannot express all this through language!

From a simpler outlook, Srila Prabhupada could never tolerate any breach of etiquette in regard to the name of Sri Krishna, the devotee, and the form of the Lord, including the form of the deity. Once, for the above reason he remained fasting for three whole days at the house of an influential man with-

out his knowledge. Another time, after hearing one local brahmana trying to classify the class and creed of Srila Raghunath das Goswami, he became extremely pained at heart. Likewise, there were numerous incidents like these reflecting his strong code of conduct. In defense of the pure devotional principle he acted like a thunderbolt while alternatively in relishing of pure devotional mellows his mood became soft as a rose shedding profuse tears in such meditation. In this way too, his relationships with his disciples harmoniously varied between these two extremes with the basis being an intense parental affection for them. He represented in the real sense the dynamic form of the divine message of Lord Chaitanya.

Previously, one who has shown an unflinching devotion for Srila Gurudeva in His heart, having always been absorbed in hearing the divine pastimes recited from his lotus mouth and had executed his instructions in terms of preaching the holy messages, has genuinely experienced real association with him. Presently, such a disciple at the time of disappearance of the spiritual master will experience in his heart intense separation and lamentation from his master with painful shedding of tears from his eyes. His earnest, pain-staking efforts to always savor the spiritual master's nectarine messages makes him almost unbalanced at present in his deep bereavement. In that type of state how could he differentiate vainly between himself and other living entities? Or could he foster in his heart any desire for material sense enjoyment or liberation?

The dual attraction and aversion for the material world in the form of sense enjoyment is the primary cause for the sprouting of evil qualities in the heart of the living entity like enmity, blasphemy and enviousness resulting in the current chaotic material environment commonly experienced by the majority of people. The point is that if one has developed even a slight devotion for the spiritual master then he would never be able to give any vent to even the slightest animalistic tendencies or the urge to cause suffering to other living entities. The normal

inclinations to yearn for sense delights through form, taste, sound, scent and touch and conversely lamentation in absence of these can never enable one to attain mercy from the Supreme Lord, Mukunda (*Mukunda, the syllables mu-ku—mean He who negates the bliss of liberation to bestow love of Godhead*). *Bhagavad Gita* (12.15):

*yasmin nodvijate loko lokan nodvijate ca yah
harsamarsa bhayod vegair mukto yah sa ca me priyah
yo na hrsyati no dvesti na socati na kanksati
subhasubha parityagi bhaktimam yah sa me priyah.*

“One who neither experiences any anxiety nor gives anxiety to others and who is free from anger, jubilation, fear or enmity is very dear to Me.”

Further, “One who does not exhibit attraction for material sense objects nor who is averse to unpleasant objects, who does not grieve when material sense objects are absent nor desires to possess them and who equally renounces pious and impious activities is most devoted and dear to Me.”

In other words, how can the heart of one who has developed attraction for the lotus feet of the spiritual master ever become inflamed by attraction or aversion to trivial material objects or similar mundane people? At that purified stage, all such devotees become convinced of the highest goal of life is to obtain exclusive pure devotion to the Supreme Lord.

To illustrate this point further, the nectarine words of Srila Prabhupada resonate in one's ear, “The highest aspiration is the dust of the lotus feet of the devout followers of Srila Rupa Goswami. All should cooperate under the guidance of the spiritual master to strive to satisfy the transcendental senses of the Supreme Lord. At no time should one exhibit an indifference to the chanting of the holy name of Krishna, mainly characterized by its seven wonderful traits. A strong affinity for the Holy Name will result in all perfections.”

All such instructions of Srila Gurudev should be deliberated upon with great seriousness until they become firmly established in one's mind. Those who are intent on following the orders of the spiritual master and are sincerely freed from all to desires to add or concoct to such instructions will come to understand that undivided efforts to satisfy the transcendental senses of the Supreme Lord is the highest goal of life. The real endeavor to follow the words of the spiritual master is the exhibition of our real love for him. Failing to understand the purport of the teachings of the spiritual master in depth but instead concentrating on serving the body of the spiritual master, thinking that it is all in all or for that matter to simply keep the temples he had established in good working order, will cause the disciple to be eventually swayed under the bewilderment that the spiritual master is a mortal being. The Supreme Lord illuminates the message of the scriptures in His various incarnations. Similarly, the spiritual master who is His non-differentiated expansion likewise serves in the same function. The verse '*sruta iksita pantha*' means the transcendental path, which is revealed after being heard in succession. For this reason the spiritual master has been often glorified:

tad padam darsitam yena tasmai sri gurave namah "

"I pay my obeisances to the spiritual master who keeps in his vision the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord."

*yad yadhiya ta urugaya vibhavayanti
tat tadvapuh pranayase sadanugrahya*

Srila Visvanath comments on the specific verse (S.B. 3.9.11) as follows, "You (Supreme Lord) reveal the truth to Your beloved devotees by manifesting in the heart of such unalloyed devotees and manifest the science of devotional service to them". This implies that the inquisitive disciple has to learn the path of regulated devotional service from the self-realized spiritual master. The great devotees have sung:

*guru mukha padma vakya cittete kariya aikya
ara na kariha mane asa*

“Steadfastness to the words of the spiritual master will cause one’s devotion for him to increase reciprocally in that same measure.”

Obedience to the bona fide guru is the ultimate criteria while simply being expert in ovation or writing beautiful compositions without attempting to practice the instructions of the spiritual master verbatim will never tantamount to actual devotion to the spiritual master but instead will edge one towards desire for self-aggrandizement. The disciple who is sincerely attempting to serve the interests of the spiritual master will eventually be awarded success for his honest endeavors. The spiritual master is none other than Lord Chaitanya’s mercy potency and this potency will definitely be imparted to his true and loyal disciples. By his mercy, the blessings of the Lord will eventually never be inaccessible to them.

yasya prasada bhagavat prasado

Those who are indifferent to receiving the grace of the spiritual master will never be able to please the Supreme Lord even after millions of lifetimes. Sri Krishna, taking the form of the spiritual master, has descended especially to distribute His mercy to the conditioned souls and to be obedient to him is the only way to obtain the mercy of the Lord as per actual scriptural injunction. The Vedas enjoin:

*yasya deve para bhaktir yatha deve tathau gurau
tasyaite kathita hyarthah prakasante mahatmanah*

“One who has devotion to both the spiritual master and the Supreme Lord will be able to understand the deep purports of the scriptures.”

May the most merciful and compassionate Srila Prabhupada shower his causeless mercy upon me and award me the gift of

eternal servitude to him! May he dissipate all the crookedness of my heart, forgive me for all my offenses and in the light of eternal servitorship as the servant of the servant, may he grant me the qualification to serve his lotus feet! Further, may I cast all attraction and aversion of the material world and be absorbed exclusively in the service of his lotus feet! Let this be my sincere plea to his lotus feet on this auspicious day.

On the disappearance of Srila Rupa Goswami, the extreme lamentation which could melt stones as expressed by Srila Raghunath Das was depicted when in that moment of sorrow he hopelessly compared Govardhana hill to be a huge snake and he likened Radha Kund to be the jaws of a tiger waiting to devour him. At the same time he compared himself to a dead body bereft of consciousness. Practically speaking, all this uncommon exhortations of such eternally liberated souls are not to be imitated by us. Srila Narottama Das too, had helplessly lamented in petition to his initiating spiritual master Srila Lokanath Das to attain the lotus feet of Srila Rupa Goswami exclaiming that he was totally dependent on the lotus feet of Srila Rupa as his all in all, as the source of his life, the perfection of all his desires, the end of all his vows, austerities and the perfection of the chanting of the Holy Name. In the driving eagerness to attain such mercy he would sob uncontrollably day and night. In actual fact, if I could personally be able to exhibit one-millionth in fraction of his love and devotion then this would be the measure of my greatest success and fortune. Frankly, I do not know for how many births I will have to wait for that golden opportunity.

The Supreme Lord is obtained by devotion to the spiritual master for he is the beloved associate of the Lord.

*diksa-kale bhakta kare atma-samarpana
sei kale kṛṣṇa ta're kare atma-sama*

"To that extent we can serve the lotus feet of the spiritual master altogether without duplicity surrendering one's body,

mind, and words without hesitation, then at that point Sri Krishna will truly regard us as His own. It is only then that we will qualify ourselves to be promoted to our original spiritual body in blissful association with Him in the spiritual world."

*nanvartha kovida brahman varnasramavatamiha
ye maya guruna vaca tarantyaajo bhavarnavam*

(S.B.10.80.33)

"Oh brahmana, amongst all those who consistently follow the varnashrama system, he who wholeheartedly serves the instructions of the genuine guru, successfully crosses the ocean of material existence and is therefore to be considered as the most learned of all."

Also the verse, as quoted by the Supreme Lord confirms the above statement; namely, "to the extent I as the Supersoul become pleased with those who implicitly follow the instructions of the spiritual master is incomparable in respect to those who in abject mediocrity maintain the specified injunctions of the different orders of life such as brahmacharya, householder, or the renounced order." In this connection, the great devotee Prahlad Maharaj advises his demoniac schoolmates by the statement:

guru susrusayaya bhakthya sarva labharpanena

Srila Visvanath Cakravarthi comments on this verse as follows, "To engage in menial services as bathing of the spiritual master, carrying the sandals of the spiritual master, including all acquired gains are to be engaged in devotional service and solely to be utilized in the spirit of surrender to the spiritual master and not for one's self-prestige."

etat sarvam gurau bhaktya puruso hyanjasa jayet

Srimad Bhagavatam (7.15.25) states that all evil qualities like lust, anger, greed, lamentation, illusion, pride, threefold suffering and bewilderment by the three modes are to be conquered

exclusively by unalloyed surrender to the lotus feet of the spiritual master. Devotion to the spiritual master can easily enable us to conquer all these bad qualities. In contrast, when one in illusion views the spiritual master as a mortal being then all his devotional practices become worthless.

*yasya saksad bhagavati jnanadipa prade gurau
martyasandhih srutam tasya sarvam kunjarasauchavat*

(Srimad Bhagavatam 7.15.26)

"One who evaluates the spiritual master, who can bestow transcendental knowledge to be at the level of an ordinary human being, will result in all of his so-called scriptural study becoming useless as that of the logic of bathing of an elephant."

Srila Visvanath comments in connection to the above verse that the word 'yasya' is used to stress the fact that even if one is absorbed in devotional practices but is affected by the erroneous conception of the spiritual master to be an ordinary mortal then all his devotional practices become useless. '*Saksad bhagavati*' implies that He is non-different from the Supreme Lord and not to be ignorantly lumped as His part and parcel. Notwithstanding, the Lord has descended taking the role of His confidential servitor and for this reason the word *mukunda prestha* is best used in reference to the spiritual master. Those who in the presence of Sri Guru compare him with ordinary people will have the drastic result of all their hard-effected devotional practices like hearing, chanting and study ect. - to be in vain.

As explained in *Srimad Bhagavatam* (7.15.27) the Supreme Lord Krishna is the maintainer of all the three worlds and the ultimate object of search of the yogis in meditation. Ironically, during Lord Krishna's pastimes there was the ignorant class who used to consider Him as among the ordinary. However, that assumption did not necessarily make Him so! In this light, Srila Gurudev's relatives out of material sentiments may tend to regard him like other ordinary people but in this regard, disciples

of the spiritual master especially must be vigilant to regard him as none other than the differentiated expansion of the Supreme Lord. As stated in the Vishnu Smṛti even when subjected to threats or abuses by Srila Gurudev one should be careful not to cause any unkind words in retaliation nor should one disrespect him in any way less act against his welfare. One who uses mind, religiosity, words, breath, including all of his wealth for the loving service of Srila Gurudev attains to the topmost spiritual realm.

Even to deliberate on whether certain words, or for that matter, actions of the spiritual master was proper or not, is not becoming for the disciple. One becomes implicated in such immature behaviour by viewing him as ordinary thereby incurring grave offence to the spiritual master. In actuality, one should bear the brunt of the burden of his instructions humbly on the top of his head and attempt to follow such instructions with all his might.

ajna gurunam hyavicaraniya

Even if one feels unable to follow such instructions one should cry at his lotus feet and plead for surcharged strength so as to be able to fulfill his instructions. It is imperative that one should never speak ill of the spiritual master or retaliate even when being treated harshly by him for this will enwrap one in the most heinous offence. By such impulsive conduct of showing resistance to the path of disciplinary restraint the disciple becomes independent and unruly gradually paving the royal road to hell. The foolish disciple by being stubborn, impulsive, lazy, argumentative etc., in the execution of his guru's orders becomes implicated in considering the spiritual master to be an ordinary being, by that waning in the proper mood of devotional service. Therefore, in the course of one's devotions one should be careful never to cause such offences against the spiritual master.

In *Hari-Bhakti-Vilas* it is mentioned with reference from the *Agastya Samhita* that for one to achieve perfection in the chanting of mantra received from the spiritual master, five

separate types of purification have to be performed. Namely, at the three main junctions of the day one should regularly perform worship of the deity form, make oblations of water, fire sacrifice, chant the Holy Name and feed the brahmanas, respectively. The mantra received from the spiritual master requires the aid of the above purificatory processes to bloom to perfection. In this particular treatise (*Hari Bhakti Vilas*) the corresponding following verse goes on to explain that without resort to these five purificatory processes or 'purascarana' one will be unable to effect the chanting of the Holy Name properly, just as a weak person cannot execute any work properly or in other words a great deal of labour is involved to merely chant the Holy Name.

In relation to the amount of merit which can be accumulated from the processes of purascarana, chanting of the Holy Name is ten times more meritorious than a fire sacrifice, while fire sacrifice is ten times greater than offering oblations in water. Offering oblations in water is ten times more potent than feeding the brahmanas. Factually speaking, it is difficult for the fallen souls of Kali Yuga to be able to follow all these laborious rules. To rule out any imbalance from not executing one of these procedures of purascarana, there is only the recommendation to increase the chanting to twice as much if any one of these five processes has not been carried out. The merciful Lord Janardana has given an alternate proviso:

*yatha siddharasamparsat tamram bhavati kanchanam
sannidhanad guror evam sisyam vishnumayo bhavet*

(H.B.V.17/241)

Srila Sanatan Goswamipada has written in his commentary in relation to the above, "Visualizing the Divinity in the spiritual master one must make all attempts to please him by obediently supplicating himself to him in every respect with a devoted mind. Consequently, by obediently executing the orders of the spiritual master all perfections are certainly obtained even without having undergone the above-mentioned five limbs of

purification. Just as by chemical interaction with mercury, copper apparently attains the effulgent qualities of gold. Similarly, proper association with the spiritual master can enable one to transcend the material dimension. Hence satisfying the spiritual master automatically awards one the fruit of the practice of all of the different purificatory processes (*purascarana*)."

Next, in regard to the holy Gopal mantra of eighteen syllables:

sri gopal mantrayam naiva kinchid apekshate

Sanatan Goswami comments that to chant the Gopal mantra there is no need for any preliminary rites or procedures. The analogy is given that just as a fire burns an object immediately on contact, similarly this mantra, upon entering the heart of the individual, automatically bears its fruit. Unlike other mantras, which are governed by various rules for their use, this Gopal mantra is special in this regard. It can bring about instant benefits on mere contact with the heart of the chanter. Therefore this mantra, being by nature very powerful and self-illuminating, is able to award quick results but is restricted by the single condition that one must hear the mantra submissively from the lips of the bona-fide spiritual master. In the conversation between Sri Krishna and Sudama their spiritual master Sandipani Muni explains to them:

*etad evahi sacchisyaih kartavyam guruniskrtam
yad vai visuddhabhavena sarvartha-atmarpanam gurau
(Srimad Bhagavatam 10/80/41)*

"The disciple should, by giving up all feelings of me (false ego) and mine (all possessions), surrender to the lotus feet of the spiritual master in return after having accepted his shelter in acknowledgement of his divinity."

Also, it has been quoted in the *Hari Bhakti Vilas* that one should normally circumbulate, pay obeisances to the spiritual master, offer him monetary funds (*daksina*) on initiation and

ultimately surrender one's body and mind to him as enjoined by the scriptures, viewing him as transcendental. Certainly, even if one gives all he has to the spiritual master still it is not possible for him to be relieved of his debt to the spiritual master. The householder may make a show of offering a huge amount of funds in the sense of offering tribute (*daksina*) to the spiritual master but Sri Krishna has explained to Uddhava the real meaning of tribute as '*daksina jnana sandesham*'. Srila Visvanath clarifies the real meaning of '*daksina*' as firstly having real experience and exultation in devotional practices like hearing and chanting after having realized the spiritual master's instruction regarding knowledge of relation (*sambandha*), devotional practice (*abhidheya*), and the goal of which is love of Godhead (*prayojana*) then consequently enlightening others of this according to their individual capability—such comprehension constitutes true *daksina* and not simply the offering of gifts of money and cloth. Therefore, the process of devotion requires self-practice.

To earn the blessings of the spiritual master and that of Srīman Mahāprabhu would entail preaching to the masses together with strictly following the self-practice of regulated devotional service. This is the real fulfillment of the outstanding debt to them. However, in not conducting oneself in the proper code of conduct and etiquette means that one is disqualified of the right to preach. Inevitably, this will make one unable to fulfill the debt to the spiritual master.

The spiritual master is the representation of the personified form of the pure devotional philosophy of Lord Chaitanya Mahāprabhu.

*ya're dekhe ta're kaha kṛṣṇa upadeśa
amara ajnaya guru hoyā tara ei deśa*

To earn the grace of the spiritual master and repay one's debt to him one has to take to the preaching of the message of Lord Chaitanya very seriously. The spiritual master, being

pleased, will definitely bless such an undertaking and empower the disciple with unlimited strength. Actually, only to the extent one perform sincere service to the spiritual master in the vigorous propagation of his divine messages will that intense desire to associate with his spiritual form arise by recurring contact with his transcendental messages. Only then will the feeling of actual separation become a reality. After entering into his eternal pastimes Srila Gurudeva has taken the form of Nayana Manjari as the confidential servitor of Sri Radha-Govinda and is merged in the ocean of blissful spiritual service. The sincere candidate will earnestly desire to go to that very place where Srila Gurudeva is absorbed in blissful service and while there plead for service to His lotus feet. He is my Lord birth after birth. My prayer is that this unqualified servitor may obtain the blessings to fulfill his orders in the light of pure practice and preaching and at the last moment of my life be granted association of his lotus feet.

The fact that my spiritual master is very far away is a very painful ordeal. May Srila Prabhupada grant me the permission to reside in his proximity even though knowing me to be his most unqualified servant of the servant. My heartfelt plea again is that he permits me to serve him in some small measure in his eternal pastimes in relation with the Supreme Lord. Though I may seem impetuous to request him in this manner being most unqualified, the fact of the matter is that the disciple has no one to call his own except the spiritual master. Srila Prabhupada, on being pleased with me, will ensure all difficulties to automatically pass within a moment. The analogy of the dwarf who extends his hand to touch the moon generally becomes a laughing stock for all seems instructive. Nevertheless, by the potency of his extraordinary mercy, which can make all impossibilities possible can not then my chanting of the Holy Name become devoid of all offence and duplicity?

*isat vikasi punah dekhaya nija rupa guna
citte hari laya krsna pasa*

*purna vikasita hoiya vraje more jaya laya
dekhaya nija svarupa-vilasa*

"Even the Name, on being slightly manifest can show me my spiritual form and by complete revelation of the pure Name will enable me to see my role in the spiritual pastimes."

The mercy of the spiritual master is precedent to eventually obtaining the mercy of the personified Name. Furthermore, Sriman Mahaprabhu had proclaimed that all perfections would manifest from chanting of the Holy Name. Srila Rupa Goswami sings in one of his compositions, '*bhavantam vande*' that "Oh Madhava! Presently I do not have even an iota of devotion for You. Still, Your extraordinary opulences are beyond compare for it can make even the impossible possible. Your mercy potency does not depend on whether I am the least qualified or not, for by its incredible power it can reverse the scales." The important point to note here is that actual mercy of the Lord referred to is only that which can be extended by his own surrendered potency in the form of Srila Gurudeva.

guru rupe krpa karen bhaktagana

For this reason the spiritual master is honoured as the merciful potency of Lord Gauranga (Lord Krishna). As stated in the teachings of Sriman Mahaprabhu to Sanatan Goswami:

*ksma yadi krpa kare kona bhagyavane
guru antaryami rupe sikhaya apane*

When Lord Krishna benedicts any fortunate soul He appears externally as the bona fide instructing spiritual master while internally bestowing mercy as the Supersoul or the Lord in the heart (*caitya guru*.) The mercy of the *caitya guru* manifests in the awarding of the qualities of pure intelligence and one-pointed determination by which the living entity can attain divine knowledge and expertise in one's devotions. The spiritual master on the other hand imparts initiation of the holy mantra to his disciples and teaches them the art of performing devotional ser-

vice. The phrase '*visrambhena guroh seva*' is instructive in this regard. Hence, without untiring service to the spiritual master one's performance of devotional service can never be perfected at any time. The word '*visrambhena*' is also used to denote full faith and devotion. The surrendered disciple in his mood of humble enquiry to the spiritual master in combination with the good qualities of strong faith and a loving service attitude will surely earn the mercy of the spiritual master, gradually acquiring divine knowledge from him and culminating in pure devotion to the Lord.

This type of service is always uninterrupted for birth after birth he has been my well-wisher. He is at all times eternally pure; never is he to be compared to the ordinary soul revolving hopelessly in the cycle of birth and death. After his disappearance, it is only through cultivation of his divine instructions that his spiritual form can be understood '*sa vetti vedyam na ca asyasti vetta*'. The spiritual master too, being in communion with the Lord knows the innermost wishes of us all but we cannot understand him. If by his infinite grace he consents to reveal his illuminating spiritual form to any particular living entity then that fortunate individual becomes blessed without comparison.

Sri guru krpa hi kevalam

"Oh Spiritual master! This most lowly servant of the servant of yours pleads that you please forgive all his offences committed knowingly or unknowingly at your lotus feet. Kindly grant him the shade of your lotus feet as well as the qualification to perform devotional service to you."

In one instance Srila Gurudev has humbly beseeched the mercy of his own spiritual master in poetry for attaining the lotus feet of Srila Rupa Goswami so he could gain ultimate entrance into the divine pastimes of Sri Sri Radha-Krishna in oblivious absorption day and night.

ajna gurunam hyavicaraniya

The duty of any genuine disciple is to attempt to follow the instructions of the spiritual master in all respects. In contrast, by failing to do likewise, if one endeavours instead for acquiring one's own gain, distinction and adoration then it cannot be termed as actual devotional service to the guru. Conversely, one's faithful attempts to fulfill the orders of the spiritual master will in turn steadily increase one's devotion for the lotus feet of guru and intensify that feeling of separation at his departure. This intense separation is the mark of eventually being able to receive the mercy of the spiritual master, which is followed by the mercy of Sri Krishna.

We are not able to perceive the setting sun when it disappears from our vision because in accordance with the rotating axis of the earth it becomes situated at the corresponding back portion of the earth. Ultimately, the sun is always effulgent and existent but sometimes it seems to appear as if it not so. In the same way the natural glaring luster of Sri Krishna sun is never dimmed at any rate for He is eternally self-effulgent. To the vision of extremely fortunate persons He manifests His birth pastimes, which are referred to as His appearance and when the same Supreme Person closes His pastimes and disappears from ordinary vision, then this is termed as His disappearance pastime. In actual fact at both times of appearance and disappearance the Supreme Person is always existent. His eternal pastimes are continuously going on without interruption. The sun, which is setting is automatically rising in another section of the earth's surface. In the same way the Supreme Lord displays His variegated pastimes in Goloka, Dwarka and Mathura and after closing such pastimes in this universe they start afresh in another without interruption.

In actual fact the analogy of the sun is not exact due to the fact that the sun is not an eternal feature but temporary in contrast to the Lord's pastimes, which are taking place eternally. All the pastimes of Lord Krishna are superhuman although He dramatically assumes the form of an ordinary mortal as in *Srimad*

Bhagavatam (1.1.20). He is always the nondoer without change—devoid of being subjected to ordinary birth like others. The appearance and inexplicable pastimes of the Lord are the hidden teachings of the Vedas and declared by them as most magnanimous.

The Gita declares that the birth and activities of the Lord are transcendental. The conditioned souls compare that which is without qualities to be above material nature while on the other hand they deem all of the Lord's pastimes to be in the light of the ordinary dealings of lusty persons. In actual fact Sri Krishna, though appearing to be an ordinary human being is never tainted by the material modes at any time, for this is the nature of His inconceivable, divine splendour. In *Srimad Bhagavatam* (1.11.36-38):

harini nūṛḡuṇaḥ saksat puruṣaḥ prakṛteḥ paraḥ

In comparison, just as the Supreme Lord is above the jurisdiction of the material senses and eternal, His non-different expansion, the spiritual master too is transcendental. Even after his disappearance he is always existent. On the contrary, people who are blinded by temporary material sense objects cannot understand his immanence after His disappearance. Our relation with the spiritual master is limited not only to this one birth but he is our lord birth after birth. As the Supreme Lord is the maintainer and guardian of the surrendered souls at every step likewise the spiritual master acts as our protector in this way. Especially, the verse '*adau guru pada-asrayaḥ*' which states that when accepting the spiritual master as one's protector and maintainer then naturally the Supreme Lord becomes the guardian of such souls. Otherwise, simply calling for Krishna and ignoring Srila Gurudeva will cause Sri Krishna to ignore that particular disciple. As the scriptures mention:

yasya deve para bhaktir yatha deve tatha gurau

"One must have equal devotion for the spiritual master and the Supreme Lord in order to realise the essence of the scriptures."

The devious mentality that I will perform immense devotional service to the Supreme Lord while a little service to the spiritual master will be more than enough is never authorized or sanctioned by the scriptures. Further, obedience to the spiritual master is to be executed at all times during both times of his appearance and disappearance without fail. Therefore a slight laxity in maintaining the orders of the spiritual master will mean that the mercy of the Supreme Lord will be denied to one.

The disappearance of the spiritual master who is one of the confidential associates of Sri Krishna is to be termed as *nitya-lila pravista om* meaning he has entered into the divine sports of the Lord. Considering him as the dear servitor of Srimati Radhika, Nayana manjari, even showing a little indifference to him would mean that one's painstaking efforts to please Sri Sri Radha-Krishna will go in vain for Sri Krishna will never appreciate any of the so-called spiritual efforts of such a disciple. If Sri Krishna becomes angry with one the spiritual master will be able to pacify Him but on the other hand, if the spiritual master becomes angry with anyone the Supreme Lord will not even cast a single glance favorably at the offender. Sri Krishna, in His conversation with His childhood friend Sudama had praised the person who is very devoted and heedful of the words of the guru.

The sign of the sincere disciple is that he should be serious to carry out the desired wishes of the guru at both the times of his appearance and after disappearance. The three fingers on the body of Sri Yamunacharya straightened out when Sri Ramunacharya agreed to carry out his last desired wishes. Srila Prabhupada had desired that all his followers take to the chanting of one lakh of Holy Names daily as practice together with the preaching of nama-bhajan through the efficacy of such practice. In this regard while being negligent of the above to simply make a show of worship of the deity for one's personal aggrandizement never did win his approval.

Srila Prabhupada never believed in equating devotional service to the Lord in the form of 'bhajan' to the worship of the

deity 'archana' which is one of its many limbs. He used to say that the implementation of service with the offering of many articles in awe and reverence to the Supreme Lord constitutes formal worship. In formal worship the gross and astral bodies are more or less automatically involved but in actual 'bhajan' one has to transcend the limitations of the gross and subtle bodies to be able to serve the Supreme Lord. The senses purified by such service become freed from all temporary designations and are elevated enough to serve the Lord in the eternal sphere. Consequently, in failing to understand the fine differences between these two, namely *bhajan* and *archana* and in not being able to revere the holy form of the deity, one becomes implicated in considering the holy form of the Lord as mere stone and by such grievous offence sinks to perdition. Therefore one should be careful not to be offensive to the deity in any way.

*yadyapy anya bhaktih kalau kartavya
tada kirtanakhya bhakti samyogenaiva*

"All other main limbs of devotional service have to be coupled with the chanting of the Holy Name to be effective. Conclusively, one should always place his faith in the process of chanting of the Holy Name and the Holy Name conversely will mercifully free one from all impurities."

"The consideration of the deity of Visnu to be mere stone, the spiritual master to be a ordinary mortal, the pure devotee to belong to a certain caste, the water which has bathed the feet of the Supreme Lord to be like ordinary water or to equate the Holy Name with material vibrations is hellish mentality and will result in one's degradation. Similar is the consideration of the Supreme Lord Vishnu to be on par with demigods like Brahma, Siva and others." One should certainly free oneself of the above deviant beliefs.

To consider the spiritual master as an ordinary mortal is the most grievous of all offences. As with the Supreme Lord, so too, His pure devotee is never affected in the least by the effects of

sensual perception in the form of sound, taste, form, smell etc. In the start of his book *Prema bhakti Chandrika*, Srila Narottam Das Thakur has eulogized the lotus feet of the spiritual master as the sole means for attaining devotion and in fact without his mercy one cannot cross the ocean of material existence. Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur has sung that only by the mercy of guru can all of one's desires for sense gratification become stifled. Srila Chakravarti in the first of his eight stanzas in glorification of the spiritual master has compared him to be like the merciful cloud of rain, which quells the burning conflagration of material life. He is the personification of the ocean of mercy for it is only by his relentless exposition of pure devotional ideals backed by scriptural evidence that an ordinary person like me had been brought forcefully on the sure path. What would have been my fate otherwise? In *Chaitanya Charitamrita* (Adi 4.21):

*mora putra mora sakha, mora pranapati,
ei bhabe yei more kare suddha bhakti*

Srila Prabhupada has commented for the above verse that in the *Chaitanya Caritamrita* we see the different terms used like devotion, pure devotion, and mixed devotion. Mixed devotion occurs when it is performed with ulterior motives or when devotion is covered by speculative knowledge, fruitive action or quest for mystic power. In short, performing devotional service with selfish desires unrelated to Sri Krishna as above is categorised as mixed devotion. When devotion is performed favorably and in various ways according to regulation to please the Supreme Lord and altogether independent of mixed devotion then it qualifies as devotion. Further, pure devotion is spontaneous and causeless, secured only by the intense greed to receive such spontaneous loving mellows of devotion. These latter devotees are not bound by formal standard rules and regulations and their natural, pure devotion is considered topmost. The other two serve to bring one to this highest platform. Those following the spontaneous path have their final station in the spiritual world of Goloka while those practicing regulated de-

votion in the mood of reverence attain the Vaikuntha worlds. Srila Krishnadas Kaviraj mentions that such pure devotees give up all types of formal religious practices and fruitive activities. In *Srimad Bhagavatam* (10.33.36) it is stated:

*anugrahaya bhaktanam manusam dehamasritah
bhajate tadrasi krida ya srutva tatparobhavit*

"To give mercy to the fallen conditioned souls the Supreme Lord Krishna had exhibited his transcendental love sports in the material world. The receptive hearing of these divine sports can attract one to pure devotional service of the Supreme Lord."

The purport of the above verse as for the words '*ya srutva*' actually refers to liberated souls on the spontaneous platform who are not restricted from hearing these divine sports. As Srila Prabhupada writes in his commentary, 'this is not subject manner for sentimental neophyte devotees for these pastimes that are nurtured by the internal potency are not easily understood. The sahajiyas or immature devotees think of such pastimes as limited and in the realm of material enjoyment. Verses such as '*tat paratvena nirmalam*' and '*tat paro bhavit*' are misconstrued by them and are defined in distorted ways. For example, the words '*tadrasi krida*' in a distorted sense can represent the satisfaction of one's senses while the real explanation of this means transcendental enjoyment.

The bound living entity, averse to Lord Hari interprets all these verses in the vision of his deviant desires of sensual enjoyment. Unfortunately, in the reversed understanding about real practice and achievement the living entity becomes a victim of shallow practices (*sahajiya*). The suffix '*bhavit*', though in the affirmative, is beyond the purview of the materialistic hedonists or those filled with all types of *anarthas* (impurities—material desires).

In the material world there is consideration of duty and non-duty while this is not so in Goloka Vrndavan. There, the

surrendered souls are simply governed by greed (*lobha*) to search out ways to relate with Sri Krishna in sweet mellows of loving reciprocation. The overwhelming attraction for such spontaneous service to one's beloved Lord is termed as *raga*, and these staunch devotees are termed as '*ragatmikās*' while the devoted followers of such pure devotees practice this type of *raganuga* devotion. The qualification of entrance is governed by the burning greed to relish such pastimes. No amount of learning or logic can equip one with the necessary qualification for participation in such pastimes; only intense hankering qualifies one to enter such pastimes. In the cultivation of such practices both the external *sadhaka* body as well as the internal perfected body are engaged. Thus externally, while performing the normal processes of hearing and chanting the glories of the Lord as performed by the *sadhaka*, internally, by the purified mind the devotee carries out service in his original identity (*siddha deha*) to the Divine Couple without interruption. Srila Prabhupada comments that one who performs devotional service on this level engages in the divine service of Sri Sri Radha-Krishna in his own internal way and not determined by scriptural authority or discipline of the spiritual master and in course of time ultimately attains the lotus feet of Sri Krishna for the Supreme Lord becomes subjugated by this method of spontaneous devotion.

One has to be completely above the common material dimension of consciousness to rise to this form of sublime consciousness. The incarnation for this fallen age, Lord Mahaprabhu has instructed us that by the tireless endeavor to practice *nama-bhajan* all the impurities of the individual will be dissipated, which can gradually propel one to rise to the path of spontaneous devotion. Srila Prabhupada has written that in relation to the sixty-four limbs of devotional service both the considerations of regulated and spontaneous devotion are to be taken into account.

The instructions of Prahlad Maharaj in *Srimad Bhagavatam* testify to the efficacy of pure devotion. So too, Lord Gaurasundar

has proclaimed the chanting of the Holy Name as the most superior of all devotional limbs. Gradually, the mercy of the Holy Name will grant one the ability to understand and relish the sweetness of the name, form, qualities and pastimes of the Lord and finally enable entrance into confidential association with the Supreme Lord—not otherwise. In this regard, the Holy Name is deemed more merciful than the Personality of Godhead, for through our concentrated endeavor in chanting of the Name and by the mercy of the personified Name we can be taken to the highest platform of devotional love. However, those who are doubtful of scriptural authority and devoid of faith can never understand or accept this highest loving conception. The faithful, discriminating person who is equipped with all good qualities solely by the mercy of the Holy Name becomes fortunate to hear from a genuine teacher the confidential pastimes of the Lord, which had never been revealed even to the goddess of fortune, Sri Lakshmi Herself. Thus after a short span of time he attains to the highest devotion and becomes freed from the lusty misgivings in his heart.

This arduous path is determined by total obedience in following the path chalked by the residents of Vraja and is impassable otherwise for those who are mere dry scholars and logicians. This is the valid explanation for the verse in the *Bhagavatam* '*vikrditam vrajavadhuhir*'. For this reason Srila Prabhupada had cautioned us against unauthorized dealings in such high subject matter but to strive to surrender completely to the practice of the chanting of the Holy Name. Nevertheless, though one should engage in the service of guru with unalloyed faith and be absorbed in the chanting of the Holy Name in the heart of hearts one should constantly meditate on achieving the desired qualifications to transcend to the spontaneous platform of devotion. Srila Prabhupada had enjoined that one should take up chanting one lakh of Holy Names daily giving up all offenses. Unfortunately we cannot complete even one-fourth of the above quota with fixed concentration and in that

state it would be sheer audacity on our part to attempt contemplation on the highest confidential pastimes.

Factually speaking, for me time seems to get shorter and shorter and my life span is being whittled away. My hand is now trembling and my ability to write with a pen seems to have dwindled accompanied by fading power of memory. My senses are not as acute as before, the body has become emancipated by age and due to all these factors of old age melancholy has crept in. This is my present state of affairs.

My only solace is the causeless mercy of Srila Prabhupada. Unfortunately in simply contemplating the need of practice of devotion I have simply wasted away most of my time. I could not even follow the main instructions of Srila Gurudev, which were to chant without offence and to keep the received mantras secret at all times. Such disobedience to the instructions of guru warrants, no purification of the mantra nor perfection of the Name and the presiding deity of the mantra never award success to one under these conditions.

Other than this aspect of lack of sincere service to Srila Gurudev again I have distributed the Holy Name to many unqualified persons thus implicating me in grave offence. In this regard the query by Sri Gadadhara to Sriman Mahaprabhu for reinitiation due to his apparent inability to utter the Holy Name properly seems appropriate for discussion on this occasion. At that time Sriman Mahaprabhu instructed him to go back to the shelter of his spiritual master, Pundarika Vidyanidhi.

*gadhadaradeva istamantra punarbara
premaniddhisthane preme koilena svikara*

Srila Prabhupada writes that the mystical formula used to eradicate one's entrapment in the sensual mire of enjoyment is termed as 'mantra'. Awarding such a mantra to unfaithful persons means that the guru who had bestowed the name inevitably becomes the victim of unlawful desires. Bad

association can mitigate or curtail the spiritual knowledge, which has been rightfully acquired. Practically speaking, one has to acquire all such uncommon knowledge again. This was the reason for the particular request of Gadhadhara Pandit. Sriman Mahaprabhu then told him to return to his previous spiritual master Sri Pundarika Vidyanidhi to hear the mantra again.

It is my strong conviction that my spiritual master will always protect his dependent disciple. Thus I, taking shelter of him, pray that I will be able to serve the spiritual master, devotees, and the Supreme Lord with unalloyed devotion and without duplicity. May He always bless such right aspirations!

Oh Gurudev! May you always protect and foster me by removing all impediments to my spiritual growth. Forgive all my offences and eternally give me the shade of your lotus feet. Further, may I always in the role of servant of the devotees become qualified to execute pure devotional service enabling my life to become blessed! In the day before your disappearance I was fortunate to be able to hold your lotus feet to my chest. May your lotus feet, which are cooling like a million moons be always imprinted on my chest and worshipped there! May your causeless, benevolent mercy dawn upon this eternal servant of the servant of yours!

*yasya prasada bhagavat prasado
yasya aprasada na gatih kuto 'pi
dhyayan stuvamstasya yasas trisandhyam
vande guroh sri caranaravindam*

Only by the mercy of the spiritual master can the Supreme Lord be pleased, for by displeasing Him there is no hope for anyone. Therefore, I meditate and glorify him during the three junctures of the day. I pay my obeisances to the lotus feet of the spiritual master.



LORD GAURASUNDARA

LORD GAURASUNDARA

Sri Krishna is the Supreme Lord and the cause of all causes. In this way the incarnation of the age of Kali, Lord Gaurasundar, is that same Lord Krishna but presently He has taken the mood and complexion of Sri Radha. In the prayers of Prahlad Maharaj to Lord Nrsingha, we have this significant verse:

*itham nr-tiryag-rsi-deva-jhasavataraih
lokan vibhavasi hansi jagat pratipan
dharmam mahapurusah pansi yuganuvrtam
channah kalau yad-abhava-tri-yuga atha sa tvam*

"Oh Lord You in Your different incarnations as man (Rama-Krishna), animal (Varaha), saint (Parasurama), demigod, (Vamana) or aquatic (Matsya-Kurma) maintain the stable conditions of the earth for prosperity. Oh Supreme Person! You protect religious principles for the different ages. You stay hidden in Kali Yuga and are therefore known as *tri-yuga*."

This fact that in Kali Yuga the incarnation of the Supreme Lord remains hidden could bewilder even the greatest scholars of those times such as Sarvabhauma Bhattacarya. The grandfather of Sriman Mahaprabhu was Nilambara Cakravarti whose fellow schoolmate was Sri Visarada. Sri Vasudeva Sarvabhauma and Sri Madhusudana Vacaspati were the sons of this Sri Visarada whose descent was from Vidyanagar. Sri Visarada's son-in-law was Gopinath Acarya.

Once Sarvabhauma Bhattacharya on seeing Sriman Mahaprabhu's love-intoxicated state before Lord Jagannath

began to acclaim Him merely as a great soul in defiance of the words of Sri Acarya that He was none other than the Lord Himself. Sarvabhauma had countered by saying that in this age there are no incarnations according to the revealed scriptures. Gopinath Acarya, feeling very agonized at the slight against Sriman Mahaprabhu then remarked, 'You are calling Yourself well-versed in the scriptures but you seem to have not understood the purports of the two main revealed scriptures *Mahabharatha*, the form of the fifth Veda and the holy *Bhagavata* where there is mention of the appearance of the Supreme Lord in Kali yuga. The term *tri-yuga* refers only to Lord Narayana who exhibits pastimes (*lila avatara*) in only three ages. In fact, you are unable to understand that in every Age there is a pre-siding expansion of the Lord (*yuga avatara*). For example in the *Bhagavata*:

*asan varnostrayo hyasya gmato'anuyugam tanuh
sukla raktas tatha pita idanim krsnatam gatah*

S.B. (10.8.13)

Firstly, Garga Muni speaks to Nanda Maharaj, "Oh Nanda! Your son reveals His own Supreme form in every age, in the previous ages He has done so in three different colors which are white, red, and yellow respectively but presently He is exhibiting the color of black."

*iti dvapare urvisa stuvanti jagadisvaram
nanatantravidhanena kalavapi tatha smu*

*krsnavarnam tvisa'krsnam sangopangastraparsadam
yajnaih sankirtanaprayair yajanti hi sumedhasah*

S.B. (11.5.31-32)

Once, King Nimi questioned the sage Karabhajan of the nine great saints, as to how the Supreme Lord was worshipped in every age, by what name and form? The Muni replied to the question by initially defining the various incarnations of the Supreme Lord in the ages of Satya, Treta and Dwapara complete

with the corresponding processes of self-realization relevant to those ages and then went on to describe that now in Dwapara Yuga people will engage in the worship of the Lord in opulence. He further requested them to listen to the method and rites in which the Lord would be worshipped in the age of Kali (revealing that in the age of Kali the devotional scriptures are mainly conducive). The purport of the third verse is that the Supreme Lord is yellow in colour (from previous verse) or His complexion is not black. Intelligent people in the age of Kali worship the yellow-complexioned Supreme Lord who is surrounded by His transcendental paraphernalia with the sacrifice of the chanting of the holy name of the Lord.

In the *Mahabharata* (Ch.149), from the Vishnu-Sahasranam prayers as spoken by Bhishma-deva to Yuddhisthira Maharaj, it is written:

*suvarṇo varṇo hemango varangascandanangadi
sanyasa kṛcchamāh santo nistha-santi-parayanah*

"The Supreme Lord will be of golden complexion and with well-formed limbs. He will be effulgent in colour and His body will be decorated with sandalwood pulp and adorned with a garland. He will be in the robes of a renounced person, endowed with all exceptional divine qualities like tranquility, and by the determined performance of chanting of the holy name of the Lord in the highest mellows will dissipate all types of opposing scriptural conclusions."

Srila Jiva Goswami has given the commentary for the verse '*kṛṣṇavarṇam tvisakṛṣṇam*' in his *Krama Sandharba*:

"*Tvisa* means one whose complexion is golden in colour or not black (*akṛṣṇa*), and who is worshipped by the intelligent class. In every age He manifests His extraordinary form, which in the previous ages had the three colours of white, red, and yellow respectively and now in this Dwapara age He will assume the colour of black. *Idanim* refers to the present age of Dwapara,

when He will be of black form. Therefore, deducing from the previous verse stated by Garga Muni that in the former ages of Satya and Treta His colour had been whitish and reddish respectively. The colour yellow (*pita*) predicted by Garga Muni, must necessarily refer to the previous specified ages of immeasurable time when in those ages of Kali, the Lord had assumed a yellow complexion as Lord Gauranga.

In the *Srimad Bhagavatam*, Sri Krishna is glorified as Supreme in His complete form and therefore all the incarnations are contained in Him and emanate from Him alone. It is in order to show this principle, which explains the reason behind the appearance of incarnations for the different ages. In fact, in one day of Brahma for a specific age of Dwapara, Sri Krishna incarnates and in the consecutive age of Kali that follows, Lord Gaura-Sundara makes His appearance. From the proof of the above statements, Lord Gaurasundar is non-other than the Supreme Lord Krishna. This conclusion is most important and cannot be denied in any way.

In this regard, the commentary of the previous verse of the *Bhagavatam*, beginning with '*krnavarnam*', by itself explains the incarnation of Lord Gaurasundara.

This can be derived from the verse from the name *krishna* which consists of the (*varna*) syllables '*kr*' and '*na*' or in other words, in the name of the incarnation Sri Krishna Chaitanya these syllables are also similarly contained. e.g. *krnavarnam*. In confirmation similarly are the words of Uddhava found in the *Bhagavata* (3.3.3):

samahuta bhismakanyaya ye sriyah savarnena
bubhusayaisam
gandharva vrtya misatam svabhagam jahne padam murdhni
dadhatsuparnah

For the words, *sriyah savarnena* Srila Sridhara Swami has given the commentary identifying Rukmi in a similar way as he whose

name contains the same syllables as Sri (Rukmini). This confirms our inducing of the name of Lord Krishna Chaitanya from Sri Krishna as from the verse '*krsna-varnam*'.

Alternatively, this '*krsnavarna*' could also be understood as He who always chants (*varna*) the name of Krishna. In other words, one who sings the name of Krishna in overwhelming bliss and with the greatest compassion distributes this Holy Name to all. We can understand it further as one who is of golden complexion (*akrsna*-not black) and at the same time '*tvisa*', by His own magnanimity, distributes the holy name of Krishna to all, or who by His radiant appearance makes all people become surcharged with the name of Krishna.

Another meaning of the verse is that the Supreme Lord Krishna, while assuming a yellowish color, remains unknown to all but the devotees. To them, He is '*tvisa*' or in whose complexion the form of Syamasundara is present. (*krsnavarnam*). Yet this also implies that He who has incarnated as Lord Chaitanya is non-different from the Supreme Lord Krishna. Next, '*sangopangastraparsadam*' goes on to describe the Supreme Lord in the form of Lord Gaurasundara who is always accompanied by His own transcendental paraphernalia as Lord Krishna. In this verse of Vyasadev '*anga*' is defined as His immediate expansions. '*upanga*' virtually means His secondary limbs or portions of the expansions, '*astra*' His weapons or that which is powerful in comparison by virtue of its effects in the form of His overwhelming devotional mellows and His confidential associates (*parsadam*) who always stay in proximity with Him.

How is the Supreme Truth, Lord Gaurasundara worshipped by His devotees? The answer is given as '*yajna*' that usually means sacrifice referring to the usual forms of worship imbued with awe and reverence.

Again, *Srimad Bhagavatam* (5.19.23) provides the clue '*na yatra yajnesa-makhah*' which explains that the best form of sacrifice conducted by the demigods is as when the glories of the Lord

are sung or chanted and not the customary worship of the Lord in pomp and grandeur. From the original verse 'yajnair-sankirtanaprayaih' directly informs us that the sacrifice referred to is the congregational chanting of the Holy Name, which is the only method of self-realization for the age of Kali. In this regard, 'sankirtana' denotes many people gathered at one place and singing the holy name of Lord Krishna in glorification. In this way it has been shown that this sacrifice of sankirtana is most appropriate and practiced by all the faithful devotees of Lord Gauranga.

From the *Mahabharata* as mentioned, as discussed, we can also find some evidence of Lord Gauranga's incarnation. Descriptions referring to His golden and glossy complexion, radiant and well-formed figure which was decorated with sandalwood pulp, who plays the role of a renounced mendicant, serene and endowed with good qualities like discipline of the mind. The jewel among the scholars Sri Sarvabhauma Bhattacharya has explained this verse, 'May the lotus bee of my mind merge in the lotus feet of Lord Sri Krishna Chaitanya who has appeared now in this world to promulgate devotional service to the Supreme Lord.' (Sri Jiva Goswami's commentary in *Krama Sandharba*)

In *Chaitanya Charitamṛta* all this has been nicely explained in *Adi lila* -3

*krsna ei dui varna sada yanhara mukhe
athava krsnake tenho varne nija sukhe*

Next, by scriptural proof *anga* refers to main limbs or that are of the nature of controller (*Iswara-tattva*), or as per the verse, Advaita Acarya and Nityananda. The portion of those expansions (secondary limbs) or that adorning the main limbs are usually referred to as '*upanga*' or the confidential devotees of the Lord (Srivasa Pandit). The weapon '*astra*' is in reference to the Holy Name, which was used to vanquish the atheistic mentality of the bonded entities by Lord Gauranga together with His expansions (*anga*) and confidential servitors (*upanga*) and who

is also accompanied by His associates (*parsada*). Hence, Lord Chaitanya has established the religious principles of this age in the form of chanting the Holy Name and intelligent people will take quickly to this method of self-realization. In conclusion, when Lord Krishna descends to execute His pastimes, Lord Gauranga likewise appears immediately in the age of Kali preceding that specific age of Dwapara. Sri Krishna descends in the form of Lord Gauranga especially to discover the depth of His own loving sentiments. In comparison while the pastimes of Lord Krishna are intrinsic sweetness predominating the mood of magnanimity, the pastimes of Lord Gauranga are magnanimous predominating sweetness.

Lord Krishna after enacting his pastimes for 125 years on this planet contemplated; 'I did not distribute the highest spontaneous loving mellows of the cowherd damsels of Vraja to the world. People are enwrapped in studying the scriptures in pursuance of formal regulated devotional service to attain Me. However, since this is done in the mood of awe and reverence it only serves to hinder the natural flow of pure devotion. This is the reason why the mood of reverence is not so pleasing to Me. Still, this practice of formal devotional service can award one the fourfold liberation such as achieving the same opulence as Lord Vishnu (*sarsti*), similar form to Lord Vishnu (*sarupya*), the planet of Lord Vishnu (*salokya*) and residence in His proximity (*samipya*) including residence in Vaikuntha. Generally, the devotees of the Lord detest the liberation that involves merging with impersonal Brahman (effulgence of the Lord). The unalloyed devotee will be loath to accept this four-fold liberation in exchange for the bliss of pure service to the Lord. Hence, the wide propagation of such pure devotion is My cherished desire. In the age of Kali I, by taking the form of a devotee, will promulgate the congregational chanting of the Holy Name through which all alike will be able to partake in the four nectarine mellows of loving service like servitude, friendship, maternal affection, and conjugal loving service. Thus, in the form of a devotee I will propagate this chanting and will make all people chant the name and dance in joy.'

In *Bhagavad Gita* the verses as '*yada yada hi dharmasya*' are very instructive; also '*paritrāṇaya sadhūnam*'; '*yad yad ācarati śreṣṭhas*' are illustrative in character regarding the above discussion meaning the function of the incarnation is to establish religious principles.

Consequently, Sri Krishna established the religious principles of this age as well as by distributing the loving mellows of the denizens of Vraja. The question then may be raised that in order to execute such a function why did He not entrust this task to His empowered incarnations? The reason for this is only the Supreme Lord had access to this confidential mellows of pure devotion and no other specific incarnations could qualify to accomplish this task.

*eta bhavi kalikale prathama sandhyaya
avatīrṇa hoilu kṛṣṇa āpāni nādiyaya*

Srila Prabhupada has given the commentary for the above verse. "At the start of every age and the end of every age, there is an equal period of overlapping called *sandhya* consisting of six divisions. Therefore, at the start of an age the *sandhya* takes a combined period of twelve parts similarly for the end of that particular age. The first *sandhyaya* in the age of Kali has the period of 3,600 years. Lord Gaurasundara appeared in the village of Mayapura during the first *sandhya* after 3,586 years."

Different scriptures verify the fact that Lord Chaitanya is none other than that same Lord Krishna. From the *Bhagavata* we have '*kṛṣṇavarnam viśakṛṣṇam saṅgopāṅgastrāpārsadam*', '*āśan vāṁmoḥtrāyoh aśya*', and '*cāṇṇaḥ kalau yad abhava tri-yuga sa tvam*'. The Vedas give evidence in verses like '*māhaṇa prabhurvai puruṣaḥ*' and '*yada paśyaḥ paśyate rukma varṇam*'. From the Agamas, we have the verses '*māyāpure bhaviṣyami śacī-suta*' and in the *Upa Purāṇas*—'*aḥam eva kascid brahmaṇa saṁnyāsaśrama-aśrītaḥ*', and '*hṛībhaktim grāhyami kalau pāpāḥaṭaṇa-naraṇa*'

"Oh brahmana, in specific ages of Kali I, taking the renounced order of life, will award devotion of Lord Hari to all humanity."

In this way too, we can understand from all this evidences that Lord Chaitanya is none other than Supreme Lord Krishna. In a direct way too, we can understand this fact from His extraordinary activities and uncommon influence that He had exhibited. Unfortunately, the materially bewildered non-devotees are unable to perceive the uncommon activities of the Supreme Lord Adhoksaja and deny His existence just as the owl staying in a crevice of the tree is not able to witness the rays of the sun and therefore unwilling to vouch for the existence of the sun. Ultimately, the fact of the matter is that in spite of the Lord remaining hidden by His inconceivable potency to the common people nothing remains unknown to His unalloyed devotees, rather His name, form, qualities and pastimes become automatically manifest by virtue of their pure devotional service to satisfy His transcendental senses. Once at the banks of the river Godaveri, Ray Ramananda in his first meeting with Sriman Mahaprabhu immediately proclaimed Him as none other than Sri Krishna Himself in spite of His golden complexion.

*pahile dekhilun tomara sanniyasi svarupa
ebe toma dekhi mui syama-goparupa*

In reply, Mahaprabhu merely remarked that a pure devotee of the Lord relates even unconscious non-living entities to His worshipping deity who is always in the vision of such a great soul. Nevertheless, even though Mahaprabhu tried to hide His true identity by this remark, Ray proceeded to reveal His actual role in this world saying,

*radhikara bhavakanti kari angikara
nijarasa aswadite kariyacho avatara
nija gudha karya tomara-prema aswadana
anusange prema-maya koile tribhuvana*

The Supreme Lord Krishna has taken the mood and complexion of Srimati Radhika to relish His own nectarine conjugal loving mellows while at the same time flooding the world with this love of Godhead in the form of a hidden incarnation. Sriman Mahaprabhu, then being subjugated by the love

of His confidential associate, smiled and went on to show His divine form as the fusion of golden-hued Sri Radha and Sri Krishna of blue-black complexion in one body—Sri Krishna taking the complexion and mood of Srimati Radhika. Though being apparently two, they have simultaneously appeared as one truth (*radha bhava dyutisuvalita*) in the form of Lord Gaurasundara. Those who can understand these conclusions regarding Sri Krishna Chaitanya and Radha-Krishna will be able to serve them eternally by the causeless mercy of Srila Swarupa Damodar Goswami.

On perceiving the form of the divine couple Ray Ramananda fell unconscious and had to be revived by the hand of Sriman Mahaprabhu, who reverted to His normal role as an ochre-clad mendicant. Sriman Mahaprabhu then embraced Him and openly declared to him His real identity as Lord Krishna having appeared in order to relish of His own conjugal mellows of devotion. The point was that Sriman Mahaprabhu could never hide His identity from His pure associates by the force of their unalloyed devotion. Yamunacarya has written in his *Stotravali*:

*tvam srilarupacaritaih paramprakrstaih
satvena satwikataya pravalaisca sastraih
prakhyatadaivaparamarthavidam mataisca
naivasura prakrtayah prabhavanti boddhum*

“Oh Lord! The learned devotees like Vyasa, noting Your different traits in form and qualities and pastimes as in Your different incarnations, can understand the form of Yours by the verdict of the scriptures in the mode of goodness but those in the mode of passion or ignorance cannot hope to understand You. Oh Lord! All things are confined by the factors of time, place, and circumstances but as nothing is greater or equal to You, therefore You very easily overstep all the limitations of time, place, and circumstances. You cover Your divine personality by the force of Your external energy but your faithful devotees are able to perceive the form of Yours.”

(Chaitanya Charitamrita, adi 3.86)

For this reason Gopinath Acarya tells Sri Sarvabhauma Bhattacharya that on getting even a drop of mercy from the Lord one will be able to understand the facts regarding the Lord's appearance and pastimes. The prayers of Lord Brahma to the Supreme Lord confirm this:

*tathapi te deva padambujadvaya
prasadalesanugrhita eva hi
janati tatvam bhagavan mahimno
na canya ekopi ciram vicinvan
(Srimad Bhagavatam, 10/14/29)*

This verifies that without the mercy of the Lord one cannot hope to fathom His glories leave alone by the aid of one's mere scholarship even to the case up to Lord Brahma.

At that time, hearing this rigid conclusion of Sri Gopinath Acarya, Sarvabhuma Bhattacharya replied by raising the question of what the proof was that he had attained the mercy of the Lord.

*vastutattva jnana hay vastu jnana
vastutattvajnana hay krpate pramana*

Gopinath Acarya replied that, "the shining example of one who has received the mercy of the Lord is when he is very competent to understand and identify spiritual truths. Even after personally witnessing Srīman Mahāprabhu's overwhelming mood of love, You failed to recognize His innate divinity because of being bewildered by the external energy of the Supreme Lord. The materialistic fruitive workers even after seeing Him in Person cannot understand His Supremacy."

The external energy consisting of the three modes of nature, is a fragmental portion of the spiritual internal potency and has two types of functions firstly, 'avaranaत्मिका' by which it covers the knowledge and the intelligence of the living entity, and secondly, 'viksepaत्मिका' by which one's search and contemplation become deviated from the lotus feet of Krishna. In short, surrender to the Lord is the only way to escape this insurmountable material energy.

As the Lord says in Gita, '*mam eva ye prapadyante mayam etam taranti te*' meaning surrender to the Lord is the way to cross the ocean of material life or as Srila Narottama Das sings '*sadhu guru krpa bina nahi upaya*' that the mercy of the devotees is essential for freeing oneself from the effects of the material energy. The truth is to harmonize both the above statements lies in the fact that the mercy of the Supreme Lord is given unconditionally to any person, but through the medium of the devotees. It is only through the medium of His devotees that the Supreme Lord surcharges any person with special potency. Sri Sarvabhauma Bhattacharya, though a highly qualified scholar, was not able to identify the meaning of the word '*tri yuga*' in the proper light. In the age of Kali there is no mention of any pastime incarnation (*lila avatara*) but indications for an incarnation for the specific age (*yuga avatara*) are present. Materialistic and argumentative people will find this hard to grasp. The promise of the Lord that He will come in every age '*sambhavami yuge yuge*' can never be wrong. So the word *channa* is used to mean that the incarnation remains hidden in the age of Kali.

Nevertheless, the Lord cannot hide His true identity from His true followers. Sincere devotees without any trace of duplicity can understand the spiritual concepts in truth while others failing to do so fall in the illusion of identifying the mere human as a demigod or true divinity as in the category of ordinary mortals or anthropomorphism.

*aro dui janma ei sankirtanarambhe
hoibo tomara putra avilambhe*

(Caitanya-Bhagavat, Madhya, 27/39-50)

'For two more births I will become your son after the introduction of this congregational chanting.'

This is a statement of Srila Vrindavan Das Thakur during Sriman Mahaprabhu's renounced order pastimes in His conversation with mother Sachi. Many people with evidence from the purport of the above verse try to introduce the idea of different

incarnations in this age of Kali. However, in the age of Kali the only other two incarnations are the form of the Lord and the Holy Name (*archavatara* and *namavatara*).

The name is non-different from the deity of the Lord and the form of the Supreme Lord, being transcendental in character.

kalikale namarupe krsna-avatara

Lord Sri Krishna advents in Dwapara age for one day of Lord Brahma. Following this advent of the Supreme Lord marks without fail the holy appearance of Lord Gaurasundara. In the cases of people who falsely assume the role of an incarnation, they only serve to create disturbances for the society in general and their actions are contrary to the conclusions of the pure devotees (see Jiva Goswami-Krama Sandharbha). As the pastimes of Lord Krishna are eternal, similarly the pastimes of Lord Gauranga are also eternal. Srila Krishnadas Kaviraj Goswami explains in *Chaitanya Charitamrita* that as the sun rises and sets in the horizon while again periodically arising at day-break, so too the Lord's complete pastimes (from childhood to final disappearance) are continually going on without break from one universe to the other and are therefore eternal. As the sun revolves in a fixed orbit without being diverted by others, similarly the Supreme Lord Krishna and Lord Gauranga are absolutely independent in conducting their pastimes.

The Lord manifests His eternal pastimes only to the vision of His unalloyed devotees being subjugated by their intense devotion. The *Katha Sruti* states:

*nayamatma pravacanena labhya
na medhya na ca bahuna srutena
yamevaisya vrnute tena labhyas
tasyaisa atma vivrnute tanum svam*

"The Supreme Absolute Truth cannot be understood by argumentation, or by scholarship. By sincerely engaging all one's

senses in the service of the Lord the living entity will automatically be benedicted by Him and as a result the Lord will ultimately reveal to him His true form."

*yesam sa esa bhagavan dayed anantah
sarvatmanasritapado yadi nirvyalikam
te dustaram atitaranti ca devamayam
naisam mamahamitidhih svasrgalabhaksye
(Srimad Bhagavatam, 2/7/42)*

'One who engages body, mind, and words in sincere service of the Supreme Lord can hope to cross over the insurmountable ocean of the material energy by His mercy (after giving up all desires for piety, wealth, satisfaction of sensual desires and liberation) thereby understanding the play of the material energy. Such devotees do not possess the mentality of those with their egocentric moods of 'me and mine', and whose bodies will eventually be devoured by dogs and the jackels,

Once in the early morning, Sriman Mahaprabhu took some *mahaprasada* (remnants of the holy food-stuffs of the Lord) and offered this to Sri Sarvabhauma. On his awakening from slumber, Sri Sarvabhauma honored this without any reservations even though he had not conducted the morning purificatory activities as brushing his teeth etc., which made Sriman Mahaprabhu exceedingly pleased lauding him that though he violated ordinary injunctions it was on the grounds of honoring the holy repast of the Lord, which made him a worthy recipient of the Lord's mercy.

*aji krsna prapti yogya hoila tomara mana
vedadharma langhi koile prasada sevana*

Therefore, without sincerely taking complete shelter of the Supreme Lord there is no way in which one can get relief from the external material energy nor can one have any idea of the nature of the Lord's transcendental pastimes.

BASIC TEACHINGS OF LORD CHAITANYA

Sriman Mahaprabhu has given most valuable knowledge regarding pure devotional principles in the categories of relating knowledge (*sambandha*), practice of devotional service (*abhidheya*), and the goal (*prayojana*) to Sri Rupa and Sanatan Goswami, which are very important for all devotees who have taken shelter of a bona fide spiritual master. He had instructed the above three principles of devotion to Sanatan Goswami step by step at Dasasvamedha ghat in Kasi and also briefly the process of devotional service (*abhidheya*) to Rupa Goswami at Prayag.

mahajano yena gatah sa panthah

One should follow the path of the great souls

Following this conclusion, we pay our obeisances to all those great souls hoping to follow in their footsteps for without their mercy one can never hope to understand this knowledge. Furthermore, without the grace of my worshipping spiritual master, Srila Prabhupada and begging for his mercy, one can never understand these instructions of Mahaprabhu. Srila Sanatan had, with folded hands and in great humility, inquired, "Oh Master, who am I? Why am I suffering from the threefold miseries caused by the modes of material nature? In which way can I obtain my real welfare? Please inform me what my duties are and delineate the essence of knowledge for my ultimate good."

In fact, Sri Sanatan was the eternal associate of Lord Gaurasundara but he made these relevant queries for the wel-

fare of all the conditioned souls so that they may be able to hear this holy discourse.

Sriman Mahaprabhu then began to reply, "Oh Sanatan! You are an embodiment of mellows of love of Krishna and in no way affected by the threefold miseries. Nevertheless, this is just an expression of your sincerity in striving for absolute perfection, hence I will explain all these principles step by step, for you are worthy of establishing the pure mellows of devotion." In this regard, Srila Krishnadas Kaviraj has put forward the following verse regarding the importance of inquiry from *Bhaktirasamrtasindhu* by Srila Rupa Goswami because it is of utmost importance to the sincere aspirant.

*acirad eva sarvarthah sidhyatyesam abhipsitah
saddharmasya avabodhaya yesam nirbandini matih*

(B.R.S., *Sadhana Bhakti*, 47)

"The religious principles inaugurated by the saintly are known as *saddharma*."

Srila Prabhupada comments for the above, "The determined person endowed with devotional pious activities (*sukrti*) who is eager to understand the science of God by steadfast and sincere constant inquiry will be rewarded in the end with that mature knowledge." Further, Srila Bhaktivinoda confirms that the sincere devotee who is very eager to attain self-realization and strives accordingly will very quickly achieve the desired end.

One eager to understand the religious principles as established by the great souls will very quickly obtain the object of their aspirations.

Sincere inquiry is the fifth of the most important limbs among the sixty four principle limbs of devotional practice and as previously discussed in the above verse, one has to be determined in inquiring into the nature of our original identity for advancement in spiritual life.

In the fourth chapter of the *Bhagavad-Gita* the Lord Himself declares that sacrifice for gaining knowledge is more superior to that of simply renouncing material goods, for such sacrifice of works ultimately leads to divine knowledge. It is this highest knowledge, which is divided into the three categories of connecting knowledge (*sambandha*), the practice of devotion (*abhidheya*) and the topmost goal (*prayojana*). The relation of the tiny infinitesimal soul with the Supreme Lord by the principle of instantaneous inconceivable oneness and difference is linking knowledge (*sambandha*); the natural duty of the living entity in the practice of devotion is the process (*abhidheya*), while the ultimate goal for the living entity is the deep loving sentiments for the Supreme Lord (*prayojana*).

The formal inauguration of sacrifice is considered within the precincts of fruitive work and the reward of such works is the satisfaction of one's gross and subtle desires for sense enjoyment. In the face of the attainment of the most sublime love of godhead, all such attempts are insignificant in comparison; in fact, they are to be condemned. The devotees of the Lord shun the knowledge involving formless contemplation of the Lord, knowing it to be an obstruction to pure devotion. Actual divine knowledge consists of worship of the absolute transcendental form of Godhead in the above three categories of linking knowledge, practice, and the goal.

Upon becoming fortunate enough to accept the shelter of the bona fide spiritual master, one then comes to the transition from the state of engrossment in fruitive activities to the understanding of the significance of divine knowledge as necessary for his ultimate deliverance. In due course of time one obtains spiritual initiation from the spiritual master and opens the door to the path culminating in transcendental knowledge. In *Gita*, (4/34) Sri Krishna informs Arjuna:

*tad viddhi pranipatena pariprasnena sevaya
upadeksyanti te jnanam jnaninas tattva-darsinah*

One should submissively serve the lotus feet of a self-realized soul and humbly inquire from him. Such a spiritual master can reveal the truth to the sincere disciple.

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur comments that for the common person it is very difficult to differentiate between the sacrifice of fruitive works and that of knowledge. For that reason he recommends that to attain to the proper level of discrimination one should approach the lotus feet of the spiritual master in the mood of humble service and submissive enquiry. One will then be able to attain self-realization in being able to satisfy the genuine spiritual master.

Srila Visvanath Chakravarti comments in this regard that in order to obtain self-realization the disciple should meekly pay obeisances to the preceptor who imparts divine truth and in the most submissive fashion inquire from him, "Oh Master, where has this material nature come from and in which way can I be freed from the ill effects of its influence?" Thus, in this way earnest inquiry and service should go hand in hand to establish the relationship with the spiritual master. In the *Mundaka Sūtri* (commentary) it has been defined:

*tadvastu bhagavat tattva-jnana labha-artha sisya samidha haste
srotriya brahma nistham sad-gurupadpadme abhigaman kariben*

"Submission to the spiritual master, inquiry, and humble service are the three offerings (sacrificial fuel) to be made by the disciple in the quest of spiritual knowledge."

These above factors are not limited for one who simply seeks realization of Vedic scriptures but rather it is meant for the serious student who wishes to enter the realm of pure devotional service. In another perspective, simply being fluent in scriptural lore is not the qualification of taking the position of guru. Factually, one must be expert in the science of devotional service and not simply know some verses by heart. He who propagates the essence of devotional service by the proper understanding of all such

scriptures while together maintaining his exemplary conduct is worthy of the label of guru.

After hearing the queries of Sanatan Goswami, Sriman Mahaprabhu then began to answer them initially with regard to the questions of 'Who am I?' in regard to linking knowledge (*sambandha*). The living entity is a tiny, pure spiritual spark but it usually identifies with the gross body composed of five elements and with the subtle body made of mind, false ego and intelligence. This is the ignorance of the living entity and is the cause of all types of illusion (*anarthas*) for by such the original pure consciousness of the living entity has become falsely identified with these coverings. Nevertheless, the answer for Srila Sanatan's simple three-worded query can fill volumes of books.

At one time during the Rathayatra festival of Sri Jagannath in the holy city of Puri, Sriman Mahaprabhu expressed eagerness to dance before the deity of the Lord. Sri Swarupa Damodar then gathered seven groups of devotees to engage in chanting of the Holy Name and he began to engage in ecstatic dancing with Sriman Mahaprabhu together with the eight personalities Srivasa, Ramai, Raghu Govinda, Mukunda, Haridas, Govindananda, Madhava and Govinda. At that time, Sriman Mahaprabhu, after paying his obeisances to Lord Jagannath, proceeded to glorify Him with these choice verses:

*namo brahmanya devaya go brahmana hitaya ca
jagadhitaya krsnaya govindaya namo namah*

"I pay my obeisances to the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna who is the benefactor of the cows and the Brahmans, the savior of the world and He who gives pleasure to the cows."

*jayati jayati deva devakinandano'sau
jayati jayati krsna vrsnivamsapradipah
jayati jayati megha syamalaih komalango
jayati jayati prthvibhata naso mukundah*

"Victory to the supreme blissful child of Devaki,
 Victory to Sri Krishna who brought light to the Vršni race,
 Victory to the tender-complexioned child of deep blue,
 Victory to Mukunda who removes the burden of the world
 caused by the wicked."

*jayati jananivaso devakijanmavado
 yaduvara parisat svairdobhirasyannadharmam
 sthiracaravrijinaghnah susmita srimumkhena
 vrajapuravanitanam vardhayan kamadevam*

"All glories to Sri Krishna, the immanent dweller in all beings, who is extolled as one who has taken birth in the womb of Devaki, the chief of the assembly of the Yadus, who with his strong arms destroys all form of irreligion, who vanquishes the sins of all types of living entities, and whose smiling face increases the lusty desires of the cowherd damsels of Vraja."

*naham vipro na ca narapatir napi vaisyo na sudro
 naham vani na ca grhapatir na vanastho yatirva
 kintu prodyan nikhilaparamananda purnamrtabdhher
 gopibhartuh padakamalayor dasadasanudasah*

"I am not a brahmana, ksatriya, vaishya, or sudra, nor am I a celibate, householder, hermit, or renunciate but I am the servant of the servant of the husband of the gopis, Sri Krishna, who is the ocean of nectarine bliss."

In this regard, the Supreme Lord Sriman Mahaprabhu teaches us by humbly taking the role of a tiny living entity and identifying Himself as the servant of the servant of the Supreme Lord. In His teachings to Sri Sanatan Goswami is the verse:

*jivera svarupa haya krsnera nitya-dasa
 krsnera tatastha-sakti bheda-abheda prakash
 (Caitanya-caritamṛta, Madhya, 20/108-109)*

Sriman Mahaprabhu has explained, "the original function of the living entity is to be the eternal servant of Sri Krishna and is of the marginal energy which is inconceivably one and different from the Supreme Lord."

In reply to the question of 'Who am I?' which was asked for the benefit of all the living beings, the Lord replied, 'I am not this gross material body nor am I related to the subtle body. I am a living entity originally the servant of the servant of Sri Krishna, and not only that but I am eternally the servant of the servant of the pure devotees of Sri Krishna.' One who is actually able to establish this relationship will together with his well being, engage in the welfare of others and in this way, the peace of the world will be ensured. The Supreme Lord though infinite in stature has an eternal relationship with the tiny living entity, both being eternal by nature. At all times he remains the servitor of the Lord and his devotees. One who is entrenched in that mood will be unwavering in his spiritual service and vision. Besides, his faith in the devotees and the Lord will become so resolute that, at one point, the normal passing of faeces will be regarded in the light of service to the Lord.

*kayena vaca manasendrayairva
buddhyatmana va anusrtasvabhavat
karoti yad yat sakalam paramai
narayanayeti samarpayet tat*

(Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.36)

"One should offer all his actions performed with mind, body, speech, senses and intelligence for the purpose of pleasing Lord Narayana."

Srila Chakravarti Thakur has commented that usually in the morning the ordinary materialistic people engage in their daily purificatory activities such as passing of stool and urine, brushing their teeth, washing their face, bathing and then proceed with great eagerness to talk about ordinary affairs of sense enjoyment while the fruitive workers, too, generally concern themselves with the worship of demigods and mundane activities which involve them with their close relatives and friends. Similarly, for the devotees of the Lord all such activities executed with the mind, body, and words are seen in the light of service to the

Supreme Lord Sri Krishna, so automatically such actions become limbs of devotional practice. Hence all activities performed with the body, mind, etc., if they are offered in surrender to Lord Narayana can then be considered as a part of devotion.

In *Hari Bhakti Vilas* it is mentioned that all actions that are executed for the pleasure of Lord Hari as per scriptural injunction are defined as regulated devotional service. These when practiced over and over again will give rise to love of Godhead. The residents of Vraja have a natural spontaneous affection for the Supreme Lord while similarly the Lord has a reciprocal affection for these simple devotees. Those practicing in the spontaneous devotional path are termed as *ragatmika* devotees and their devoted followers are obedient to the path of *raganuga* devotion. However, simply following the path of regulated devotion will not enable us to come up to the path of spontaneous devotion.

viddhi bhakti vraja bhava paite nahi sakti

In the book *Bhaktirasamrta-sindhu* it is described that the natural overpowering mood to serve one's worshippable deity is known as 'raga'. The continuous engrossment of such devotion to Sri Krishna is declared to be 'ragatmika'. As described in *Chaitanya Charitamrita* (Adi 4.267-278) the gopis of Vraja were never influenced in any way by even a trace of lust because of their intense attachment to the Supreme Lord in loving mellows. Acting for the pleasure of Sri Krishna alone in the real mood of spontaneity, they were never in any way overpowered by happiness or sadness having given up all varieties of religion and at the same time tolerated the opposition of society and family.

From our discussion of establishing our natural position as the servant of the servant of the Supreme Lord we understand that we have to strive not only for our progress but also for the welfare of others. Nevertheless, while doing these dual activities, one important factor to be considered is to be careful to weed

out any pride that arises in our heart, for if we are not careful in this regard that will serve to hamper our efforts to please Sri Krishna. Therefore, it will be good practice to repeatedly assimilate the instructions regarding this practice as given in the book *Manah Shiksha* of Srila Raghunath das Goswami with the purports of Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur. Thus, by their mercy we can qualify as candidates for entering the realm of pure devotional practice. If not, then this type of dangerous pride will cause havoc in our devotional practices, which will all prove to be futile just as offering ashes in the sacrificial fire.

*guru, vaishnava, bhagavan tinera smaran
tinera smaran haya vighna-vinasana*

It is mentioned in the holy scriptures that, : "By remembering the spiritual master, the devotees and the Supreme Lord all of one's obstacles to devotional service will be destroyed and all of one's desires will be fulfilled." In this context, Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur informs us to keep faith in the pure devotees, the spiritual master and the Holy Name in order to give up pride and elevate oneself to achieve spontaneous devotion.

Amidst tumultuous vibrations of the Holy Name, the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna appeared as Lord Gauranga to the pious couple Sri Jagganath Misra and Sachidevi in the hamlet of Mayapura on the fullmoon day of the month of Phalguna. After executing His divine pastimes for a period of 48 years He then disappeared in Puri at the temple of Tota Gopinath, the worshippable deity of Sri Gadādhara Paṇḍita. He spent His first 24 years as a householder in Navadvīpa while the remaining twenty-four years were spent as a renunciate. During His household life, He was constantly engaging in congregational chanting of the holy names. His first six years as a renunciate were spent wandering in the different holy places of pilgrimage preaching the glories of the Holy Name. During His last eighteen years He resided in the holy city of Puri and drowned all of His associates in the ocean of nectarine love of Sri Krishna while

especially the last twelve years was spent in relishing the conjugal mellows of loving separation with Sri Krishna in the association of His confidential associate Sri Ramananda Ray, in His solitary room at the Gambira.

These periods of His pastimes has been divided by Srila Krishna Das Kaviraj in the book *Sri Chaitanya Charitamrita* as *Adi* (boyhood through household life), *Madhya* (first six years as a renunciate), and *Antya lila* (the final eighteen years). The evidence of such pastimes was found in the writings of Sri Murari Gupta in the case of *Adi lila* (first 24 years) and the remaining pastimes were compiled from the diaries of Srila Swarupa Damodar and that which was heard from the lips of Srila Raghunath Das Goswami. Srila Raghunath Das Goswami had received valuable information from Srila Swarupa Damodar for sixteen years in Puri and witnessed many things personally with his own eyes and all such valuable information was later passed on to Srila Krishna Das Kaviraj. Therefore not one word of this sacred book was composed irregularly.

All of Sriman Mahaprabhu's pastimes were saturated with His preaching of the Holy Names of the Lord while conducting congregational chanting. He was born in the midst of the chanting of the Holy Names of the Lord, on the night of Falguni Purnima at the time of the lunar eclipse. As a young child He would often cry but would quiet down when all relatives present would loudly chant the holy names of the Lord. In this way, on the pretext of crying the small child would unwittingly engage all in the chanting of the Holy Names. The women-folk used to address Him as Gaurhari. In this context, the period from the crawling stage of the baby until the age of five is termed as childhood. From then until the age of ten is considered the period of boyhood after which the period leading up to the age of fifteen is considered as youth. This is followed by early manhood.

In his boyhood and youth, he used to engage in intense study and at the same time would teach Sanskrit grammar. In this

regard Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur has commented that Sriman Mahaprabhu, whilst teaching Sanskrit grammar, would explain it in the light of Krishna's holy names. Later, following this method of Sriman Mahaprabhu, Sri Jiva Goswami composed two Sanskrit educational treatises called *Laghu Vyakaran* and *Brhat Vyakaran*. By study of these two books, one can facilitate both one's knowledge of Sanskrit grammar and at the same time give himself impetus for devotional service to Krishna.

Soon after the marriage of Sriman Mahaprabhu during His youth, he would constantly engage in the preaching of the holy names of the Lord. He would advise all to broadcast the chanting of the Holy Names of the Lord. In this way, he drowned the whole village of Navadvipa in the ecstasy of the Holy Name.

At one time, Sriman Mahaprabhu instructed both His close associates Sri Nityananda Prabhu and Sri Haridas Thakur to go from house to house and humbly beg all to take exclusive refuge in the holy names of Sri Krishna and at the end of the day they were to report to Him on the results of such preaching. Taking this instruction as their life and soul, the two pure associates of the Lord began to wander from door to door begging all alike to take to the Holy Name as their only shelter. The result was that they became the object of all kinds of sarcastic remarks and lewd comments from the ignorant class. However, the gentile, knowing them to be renunciates, began to invite them to take food grains in their homes. The two stalwart devotees gently refrained from such offers instead informing them that the only alms they required were for all to agree to take to the chanting of the holy names of Lord Krishna. Then, by providence, they came face to face with the two drunken rogues Jagai and Madhai whose final deliverance from their existing wretched state of existence by them is explained at length in the fourteenth chapter of the *Chaitanya Bhagavata*.

Sriman Mahaprabhu spent 24 years of His household life in ideal propagation of the Holy Name for the deliverance of all

the conditioned souls. The main theme of his lifestyle was that one has to practice what he preaches.

apane uchari dharma jivera shikhaya

He acted the role of the gardener, cultivating the desire tree of devotion in the island of Navadvipa and would taste the ripened fruits of that tree whilst mercifully and impartially distributing these ripened fruits to one and all. At the same time He ordered all to follow in suit and do the needful in freely distributing this ripened fruit of devotion.

*ek mali ami kahaa kahaa jabo
eka va kata phala padiya vilabo
ataeva mali ajna dile savakare
yaha taha premaphala deho ya're ta're*

In short, as mentioned in *Chaitanya Charitamrita* (Adi lila, 9th chapter), we can learn that although Srīman Mahāprabhu had given everyone equally the qualification to taste and distribute the fruits of love of godhead, yet if this is performed ignorantly under the cloak of hypocrisy or without executing the proper code of devotional conduct then such preaching will not achieve any success.

*acara karaye keho na kare pracara
pracara karaye keho na kare acara
acara pracara namera karaho dui karya*

On one occasion, Sanatan Goswami mentioned to Srīla Haridas Thakur, "some people engage in preaching but do not show model behavior. Others while maintaining their excellent code of behavior do not make any effort to preach. Consequently, the two activities should be practiced simultaneously for successful propagation of the Holy Name and for this reason you are the spiritual master of the world."

The other important point, as previously mentioned is at no time should any pride be cultivated during the sincere execution of these dual activities. In other words, false pride or prestige should be given up altogether.

One should never profess himself as an elevated devotee for then he will not learn to respect others, or when false prestige pollutes the heart then there will exist the chance of one's sliding down towards hell. The ideal position is to establish oneself as the servant of the servant of the pure devotee of Sri Krishna. This is the reason why Mahaprabhu has coined the verse '*tmad api sunicena*'. One who hopes to advance in the path of devotional service should possess the four qualities of being humbler than the straw in the street, more tolerant than the tree, being ready to give all respects to others and being devoid of false prestige. Hence, in not cultivating these exceptional qualities one will never be able to advance towards the nectar of God consciousness.

As Srīman Mahaprabhu informs Ray Ramananda, "The fact that king Pratrāpudra has some reverence and love for you will move Krishna to accept him because of that unique quality." (C.C., *Madhya*, 11.26-27) (as in honoring pure devotees)

In *Adi Purana* the Lord declares, "Oh Partha, factually one who simply considers himself to be My devotee is not My devotee but one who is the servant of My devotee is most superior." Further, in the *Srimad Bhagavatam* (11.19.19-20) the characteristics of a pure devotee of Sri Krishna are described:

*adarah paricharyam sarva angair abhivandanam
mad bhakta puja abhyadhika sarva bhutesu sammatih
mad arthe vanga cheshta cha vachasa mad guneranam
maryarpanancha manasah sarva kama vivarjanam*

Sri Krishna describes the qualities of a genuine devotee as, "One who usually takes the menial role of servant, who glorifies Me with his different limbs, who worships My devotees, regards all beings in relation to Me, works for Me, praises Me by means of speech, surrenders one's mind to Me and also gives up all kinds of desires not in relation to My service."

In the *Padma Purana* Siva informs Parvati that the worship of Lord Vishnu is superior to that of the demigods, but in

comparison, the worship of the devotees of Vishnu is most superior. Further, the *Srimad Bhagavatam* (3.7.20) informs us that, "Those with very little merit of austerities at their disposal will find it very difficult to obtain the direct service of the pure devotees who are always chanting the glories of Lord Janardana."

After 24 years in the household order, Sriman Mahaprabhu later performed the pastime of taking the renounced order of life after which He left to reside at the holy city of Puri. However, he returned to Navadvipa at the end of the month of Phalguna (February-March) to participate in the current festivities (*Dol yatra*). Consequently, while there He performed the wondrous deliverance of the scholar Sarvabhauma Bhattacharya from his impersonal philosophy. During the month of Vaisakh, He began to contemplate a tour of the southern regions of Bharata.

Sriman Mahaprabhu knew that his eldest brother Visvarupa had taken the renounced order under the title of Sankaranya and had finally conducted his disappearance pastime at the holy place called Pandharpura. In the pretext of searching for His brother He set forth and under the gentle persuasion of Sri Nityananda allowed Himself to be accompanied by a simple brahmana named Krishnadas who engaged in His service. In the association of this brahmana, Mahaprabhu wandered all throughout the holy pilgrimage sites whilst chanting the Holy Name and was thus always absorbed in a love-intoxicated state. He used to sing:

*rama raghava, rama raghava, rama raghava raksha mam,
krishna kesava, krishna kesava, krishna kesava pahi mam*

He continuously performed the chanting of the Holy Names without exhibiting any sign of fatigue. In the *Chaitanya Charitamrita*, Srila Krishna Das Kaviraj mentions His extraordinary preaching pastimes in which He, in that love-intoxicated state, would request to all and sundry on the pathway to take the Holy Name without any reservations. His loving mood endeared all to automatically follow Him until at some

stage later He would embrace them and, surcharging all such devoted persons with renewed energy, would gently part with them. That person being infused with His potency and proceeding along the path and at times manifesting an overwhelming mood of devotion, would in turn appeal to all he met to take up the chanting of the Holy Name. Consequently, that same person being so empowered was able to convert his whole village to devotional service. In this way, Sriman Mahaprabhu managed to convert whole villages into the doctrine of pure devotion. By His divine influence and sometimes simply by his charismatic presence, Sriman Mahaprabhu was able to change all alike into devotees of Sri Krishna.

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur has commented in regard to this type of surcharging energy that He had imparted to the common people. "The essence of the pleasure potency (*hladini*) and that essence of the knowledge potency (*samvit*) in combination comprises the devotional potency. On event of the Supreme Lord or the pure devotee bestowing that potency upon anyone, that fortunate individual becomes a great devotee of the Lord. Sriman Mahaprabhu endowed such fortunate people with this special potency who had then become capable through that agency to spread the ancient religion of devotion to innumerable other people. Thus in the course of His travels He, while embracing many different people, inspired them in such a way that they began to take up the task of preaching to the masses with renewed energy thereby drawing large numbers of people into the fold of devotional service. In this manner, the Supreme Lord showed His extreme magnanimity and compassion in delivering innumerable people of the southern regions." In this context, the question may arise why the Lord did not show the same compassion in His own hometown of Navadvipa!

*navadvipe yei sakti na koila prakase
sei sakti prakasi nistarilo daksina dese*

(C.C. M.7/105-109)

As described in the commentary for the above verse, the answer is given that at that time Navadvipa was a bustling center

of learning and many of the so-called scholars who resided there were very proud of their so-called scholarship and completely materialistic being averse to the lotus feet of Sri Krishna. For exactly this reason the Lord did not make any effort to surcharge them with any potency thus allowing them to continue their term of ignorance.

In the *Chaitanya Charitamrita*, Srila Krishna Das Kaviraj quotes that those who doubted or showed disbelief in any of His extraordinary pastimes became completely devoid of spiritual knowledge and bereft of any chance of happiness in either in this world or the next.

*alaukika lilaya yara na haya visvasa
ihaloka paraloka tara haya nasa*

Srila Prabhupada comments for the verse (*Madhya*, 7.112) of *Chaitanya Charitamrita* that the extraordinary pastimes of Sri Krishna Chaitanya are devoid of any type of cheating propensity being completely transcendental and the highest welfare for the aspiring soul. Conversely, those ignorant cheaters who misguide other equally foolish persons both fall from the path of service to Krishna and become doomed to perdition.

At one time in the course of His travels, Sriman Mahaprabhu came to a place called Kurma. There, seeing the presiding deity, Mahaprabhu became ecstatic and began to dance, sing and glorify the deity (Vishnu) with many choice words. This moving spectacle of overwhelming devotion invited the interest of many of the gathered people who became completely astounded. In fact, after some time they too became drowned in the ocean of devotional bliss and began to dance and sing in ecstasy.

Wherever Mahaprabhu went He submerged all in that vicinity in the blissful ocean of pure devotion for Sri Krishna. In that particular village, there resided a brahmana named Kurma who with the utmost faith invited Sriman Mahaprabhu to his house for receiving alms. The devotee Kurma initially seating

the Lord began to proceed to wash His feet with great adoration. Then after first drinking it himself in great joy he began to distribute that water to all those in his household. After feeding the Lord with varieties of the most delicious foodstuffs, he, with the greatest humility, submitted to the feet of the Lord and pleaded that because His material attachments had now decreased he wished to accompany the Lord. In spite of his earnest entreaties, the Lord simply requested him to stay in the house and dedicate himself to the rigid and uninterrupted chanting of the Holy Name together with the order to preach the glories of this Holy Name in the role of a spiritual master to whomever he met. In that way he would never be bewildered by the external energy of the Lord and would assuredly have the fortune of meeting Him once again.

*grhe rahi krsnanama nirantara loiba
yare dekho tare kaho krsna upadesa
amara ajnaya guru hoiya taro ei desha
kabhu na badhibe tomara visaya-taranga*
(C.C. M.7/127-9)

Later, in the same manner several other dedicated souls were advised in the same manner by the Lord to chant the Holy Name rigidly without fail- and to preach this Holy Name to all. Consequently, those who took the Lord's advice to heart became freed from the arrogance of thinking themselves as gurus and were saved from deviating from the spiritual path. The great souls have recommended that the sincere aspirant should give up the notion or arrogant feeling that one is a great devotee.

*ami to vaishnava ei buddhi hoile amani na habo ami
pratisthaasa asi hrdaya dusibe hoibo nirayagami*

Anyone who pollutes his heart with such pride eventually becomes a resident of hell. Even though performing the function of guru, one should never revel in accepting adoration and worship from anyone. In this regard, the recommendation is not that one should desist from taking the role of a guru out of fear

of being implicated by pride. On the contrary, one has to follow implicitly the instructions of Sriman Mahaprabhu to carry out the task of preaching of the divine message with practice as prescribed. The eternal duty of the living entity, that is to perform service to the Supreme Lord, becomes fulfilled in this way. Prahlad Maharaj glorifies Lord Nrsingha in the following manner:

*prayena deva munayah sva vimuktakama
maunam caranti vijane na pararthanistha
naitan vihaya krpanan vimumuksha eko
nanyam tvadasya saranam bhramato anupasye*

(Bhag. 7.9.44)

Prahlad Maharaj prays, "Oh Lord! Those aspiring for their own salvation may practice vows such as austerities, silence in secluded places but I do not wish to attain liberation alone leaving these poor, conditioned souls aside, for I do not see anyone else other than You as the sole supporter of these wandering living entities."

From his prayer it is to be noted that Prahlad has also expressed the importance of seeking one's highest welfare.

Similarly, Sriman Mahaprabhu has given the instruction one should not only attempt to make one's life perfect but should attempt to preach the divine message for the welfare of others. In order to subjugate the feeling of pride, one has always to nourish the feeling that I am the servant of the servant of the spiritual master, the pure devotees and the Supreme Lord, always making an effort to place the burden of their divine instructions on one's head in complete obedience. In other words, one can be freed from any pride lurking in the heart only through this menial role being firmly established in one's mind.

In this context, Srila Prabhupada mentions that for those aspiring renunciates who desire to take full shelter of the Lord, Sriman Mahaprabhu's condition in accepting them is that they

should give up all attempts to profess as great devotees fearing that they will be affected by the preaching to others. Rather, they should be fully absorbed in the chanting of the Holy Name and should boldly preach this Holy Name giving up all false humility. In this way they can never be affected by the material energy. Many such ignorant people dare to criticize the great souls like Ramanujacharya and Srila Narottama Das Thakur who accepted many disciples by insinuating that such activities are impediments to the cultivation of devotion. Such people are especially recommended to give up such offensive mentality to the great souls and meditate in filial obedience on the above instructions of Srīman Mahāprabhu to increase their devotional service to the Lord.

Soon afterwards, in the same township of Kurma, the Lord delivered a leper by the name of Vasudev by embracing him. Vasudev, on being freed from his loathsome disease, could not believe his fortune and in tears of gratitude, while glorifying the Lord, admitted that now he feared the recurring rise of pride in his normal state as opposed to when he was suffering the effects of his disease. To this the Lord simply remarked that in carrying out the dual functions of practice of chanting the Holy Name constantly and preaching of the same he would be freed from the effects of pride and would eventually be accepted by Sri Krishna.

The living entity is a spiritual spark of the Supreme Lord's marginal potency—instantaneously and inconceivably one and different from the Lord. Srila Bhaktivinoda comments, 'the living entity is situated between the spiritual and material worlds having relation to both and is therefore called the marginal potency. The tiny living entity is a spiritual spark from the spiritual world and although non-different in quality from Sri Krishna, in quantity he is very tiny in comparison to Sri Krishna who is infinite in size. The Lord is the ocean of pure consciousness while the living entity is a tiny particle of consciousness, comparable to the sun and its rays, justifying the principle of

instantaneous, inconceivable oneness and difference. Another example to elucidate the conception of the living entities is as sparks emitted from the blazing fire. In short, this marginal potency has both spiritual and material characteristics having relation with both worlds.

The *Bṛhadaranyaka śruti* confirms that the living entity has access to both the spiritual and material worlds and is currently situated in a dream state, or the marginal position, from which he can have access to both the material phantasmagoria and the spiritual world. The same *śruti* has another verse that compares the living entity to a fish, which can swim from one side of the river to the other bank. This analogy is applicable to the living entity who can move towards either the spiritual or material worlds—from the dream state or the fine sector of demarcation between these two. From the previous declaration of the *śruti* we understand that the living entity, being separated from the Supreme Lord, is compared to an emanating spark from the blazing fire. In actual fact, all living entities are purely spiritual emanations from the Supreme Lord. Thus, the tiny *jivas* of pure consciousness have arisen from the marginal demarcation (*tatastha*) but their actual identity is as a servant of Lord Krishna. Still, from their middling position, being able to observe both worlds, the desire for sense-gratification had sprung forth which made them averse to the lotus feet of Sri Krishna. Inevitably, they became summoned by the material energy and compelled to take up this material body. Being forgetful of Sri Krishna for immemorial time, they have been wallowing in their ignorance. Their present fate was sealed as result of grave offence due to the misuse of their free will.

Lord Sri Krishna is never in any way responsible nor affected by the plight of the living entities. The tiny entity naturally endowed with free will is forced to reap the results of his own actions by his own devious mentality. Lord Krishna does not at all have any contact with the material nature. That work is

performed by Maha-Vishnu who injects the offensive souls into material nature by His glance. The souls bound by the material energy are then subjected to all sorts of material distresses.

The Supreme Lord has two categories of expansions, *svamsa* and *vibhinnamsa*. The former are all incarnations of Lord Vishnu while the latter belong the category of living entities. The incarnations of the Lord, though ideally non-different from Lord Krishna and complete in energy, are unflinchingly obedient to the will of the Lord, not desiring any separate free will. In contrast, the living entities with their separate false ego and with comparatively minute strength have their own false sense of independence from Krishna. Even though innumerable living entities emanate from Sri Krishna, the Supreme Lord does not suffer from any loss in His completeness or absolute position. All the living entities even before entering the material domain can be said to be averse to the Lord for an incalculable period of time by virtue of offence. (This extract is quoted from Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur's *Teachings of Lord Chaitanya*.)

Hence being forgetful of our real position, we are forced to endure the tribulations of the three kinds of material suffering. The result of ignoring the injunctions of the scriptures has compelled us to suffer different types of sorrow. In the *Gita*, the Lord has instructed that those who do not follow the instructions of the scriptures will never be successful in either obtaining happiness in this life or the next. The scriptures are the key for determining what has to be followed and what is in the province of wrong action. Those foolish persons who do not heed the scriptures like *Bhagavad Gita* or the *Srimad Bhagavatam* will be forced to endure untold suffering.

In *Chandogya Upanishad* it is mentioned that one who eats pure foodstuffs will be able to purify his subtle consciousness giving him impetus to remember the Supreme Lord. Simply, adding ghee to *atap* rice with sea-salt does not constitute pure *havisyana*. In fact, that which does not have any relation with

the Supreme Lord can never give any substantial purification to the individual. Whatever sensual action executed by a person will become purified only in being linked with the Supreme Lord.

The Lord declares that everything should be done for Him in relation to eating, gifts, sacrifices or austerities of every sort. Many zeros by themselves have no meaning but when a single one is added before them then that number becomes very significant. All foodstuffs should first be offered to the Supreme Lord and then after serving the same to the spiritual master that can finally be honored as remnants of the Lord by the devotees. It is by these means that the insurmountable material energy can be gradually overcome.

Srila Vyasadev, the incarnation of Lord Narayana, had appeared in order to secure the welfare of the living entities. He divided the infallible Vedas into four parts namely the Rig, Yajur, Sama, and Artharva. Later, to explain the purports of the Vedas, He compiled the *Brahma Sutra*, the ancient histories like *Mahabharata*, the eighteen primary Puranas, which were written in the folds of goodness, passion and ignorance respectively, and the eighteen secondary Puranas. He also compiled the *Srimad Bhagavatam*, which is the real commentary of the Vedas (as well as the Gayatri) by which the conditioned souls are not deviated from their primary goal in life. This great work was undertaken in a state of intense concentration upon the Lord.

As the *Bhagavad Gita* is considered the essence of all scriptures, similarly the *Srimad Bhagavatam* is the natural commentary of the Vedas and reveals the purport of all scriptures. In this holy book, the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna is glorified as the most adorable deity. Our actual process of worship is following the mood of worship in the conjugal loving mellows of Srimati Radharani. The natural spontaneous mood of worship as conducted by the gopis is our desired path leading to the highest

goal of life, love of godhead. This supersedes the four common goals of life namely piety, economic development, satisfaction of one's desires and liberation. In conclusion, to follow in the footsteps of these cowherd damsels is the aspiration of all devotees in order to obtain the wealth of pure devotion.

Obedience to this path of spontaneous devotion under the guidance of a pure devotee is defined as *raganuga* devotion. Srila Kaviraj Goswami writes that aspirants indulging in fruitive activities, quest of knowledge or yogic perfections cannot move Sri Krishna who is subjugated by pure devotional service alone.

*na sadhayita mam yogo na sankhyam dharma uddhava
na svadhyayastapasyago yatha bhaktirmamorjita*

(S.B.11/14/20)

Sri Krishna declares, "All practices of the eightfold yogic system, the knowledge of *sankhya*, austerities or renunciation do not indebt Him as the practice of intense devotion."

In the former discussion devotional practice is twofold—namely regulated devotional practice and spontaneous devotional practice.

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur writes that when devotion is accomplished through the medium of the senses in order to progress to *bhava* that is called regulated devotion. The eternally perfected mood of the living entity is pure devotion. To bring it into the heart of the devotee is the accomplishment. The purport is that in the infinitesimal living entity there is a portion of the bliss of the Lord, which had been lost by the bondage of the soul. To cause the original state to be manifested by the regulation of the senses through the means of devotional service is *sadhan bhakti*. Lord Krishna is always in His eternally perfected state and love of Godhead cannot be accomplished by formal regulated practice. There is no other way of obtaining Him other than conducting hearing and chanting of His pastimes etc., with a purified mind. Hence, in the beginning stage one has to

practice the process of formal regulated devotion in accordance with the scriptures to come gradually to the state of spontaneous devotion. Of the sixty-four limbs, five limbs are considered most important: chanting of the Holy Name, association of devotees, residence in the holy dham, service to the holy form of the Lord and hearing of the holy scripture *Bhagavata*. Above these five, worship of the deity with faith, chanting of the Holy Name and residence in the Holy Dham are most superior. Even a little practice of these five limbs with sincerity can make one rise to the spontaneous platform. The practice of even one of the five can bring one to the platform of steadiness (*nistha*) and the fruit of cultivation of such practices is the relinquishing of impurities (*anarthas*), and consequent steadiness in one's devotional practices to lead to the attainment of love of Godhead.

King Parikshit attained perfection by hearing the pastimes of Vishnu, Sukadev Goswami in chanting the glories of the Lord, Prahlad Maharaj by hearing such glories, Lakshmi by serving the lotus feet of the Lord, King Prthu by worship, Akrura by glorifying the Lord, Hanuman in the mood of the servant, Arjuna as a friend, and Bali Maharaj by offering his whole self to Sri Krishna. (C.C.M 22/132)

*su vai manah krsnapadaravindayor
vacamsi vaikunthagunanuvarnane
karau harermandiramarjjanadisu
srutinchakaracyuta-satkathodaye*

(S.B.9/4/18-20)

In *Srimad Bhagavatam* it is explained that, 'King Ambarisha engaged all his senses in the transcendental service of the Lord, his mind was fixed on the lotus feet of the Lord, his voice was constantly glorifying the qualities and pastimes of the Lord, his ears were engaged in hearing the fame and pastimes of the Lord, his hands were engaged in cleaning the temple of the Lord, his eyes in perceiving the beautiful form of the Lord, his sense of touch in touching the body of the pure devotees, his sense of

taste in tasting the tulasi leaves offered to the Lord and he also renounced all his sense desires especially lust by acting in menial service whereby earning strong attachment in surrender to the pure devotees of the Lord.'

Srila Prabhupada comments in regard to the verse '*kama cha na tu kama kamyaya*'-that King Ambarish controlled his mind by accepting (honouring) all the remnants of the articles of the Lord simply for the pleasure of the Lord and devoid of any sense of his own personal enjoyment. Uddhava's statement corroborates this:

*twayopabhukta sragvasolankaracharchitah
uchista bhojino dasas-tava mayam jayema hi*

(S.B.11/6/46)

"Oh Lord! I, Your unalloyed servant, in honoring the remnants of your foodstuffs, cloth, scents, ornaments in an unattached way will be able to overcome Your material energy."

*bhajanera madhya srestha nava vidha bhakti
krsnaprema krsna dite dhare mahasakti
tahara madhya sarvasrestha nama-sankirtana
niraparadhe nama loile paya prema dhana*

(C.C.An.4/70-71)

Sriman Mahaprabhu has taught Srila Sanatan Goswami that the nine-fold process of devotion is the highest for obtaining the wealth of Sri Krishna and among them, the most superior is chanting the Holy Name which when chanted offencelessly will definitely award them the wealth of devotion to the Supreme Lord.

In the commentary of Srila Visvanatha Chakravarti of Rig Veda verse (8.3.8) it is stated, "Oh, Lord Vishnu! Your holy name is transcendental and self-effulgent. Even if someone chants Your holy name having only very little knowledge regarding its importance or glories, still in the manner of taking the shadow

name his efforts will never be for naught for the Name by itself is self-perfect and will eventually lead him to real understanding. Even if he takes to the chanting of the Holy Name overcome and absorbed by fear and aversion against the Supreme Lord in that condition too, he can still attain liberation." Therefore, even by accident if one chants the Holy Name, the Name can afford liberation.

All the main authorized scriptures proclaim the glories of the Holy Name. Similarly, Sriman Mahaprabhu has verified this *Srimad Bhagavatam* as the cream of all the scriptures, in which the importance of chanting the Holy Name is confirmed in full measure. In the first canto of this book the duty of all individuals to practice devotional service to the Lord in a causeless and uninterrupted manner has been discussed. This has been further, elucidated in the sixth canto:

*etavan eva loke'smin pumsam dharmah parah smrtah
bhaktiyogo bhagavati tannama grahanadibhih*

(Bhag. 6.3.22)

"The highest duty of the living entity is to worship the Supreme Lord Vasudeva through the chanting of the Holy Name."

In the story of Ajamila it is said that even the shadow Name can afford atonement even for the most heinous sins. It is explained that Ajamila lived his whole life in a mire of sin and had not performed any atonement and therefore the messengers of Lord Yama were ready to bring him to hell to suffer the corresponding punishment by which he could be gradually purified. However, the messengers of Vishnu refuted them by saying that this brahmana had, by chanting the Holy Name of the Lord, become purified not only from the reactions of this one birth but for his previous millions of births. They continued by stating that the best way of atonement is the chanting of the Holy Name. The ordinary prescribed methods of atonement according to scripture can no doubt give one relief from sinful

activities but the residual contamination in the heart can never be removed. Atonement by itself never leads to the total eradication of sins. Ajamila became freed at the root from all sinful tendencies by taking the name of his son Narayana or by unintentionally chanting the name of the Lord (*namabhasa*). Finally, the messengers of Vishnu freed Ajamila from the ropes of the representatives of Yama and disappeared from the scene.

For all sinful people who indulge in obnoxious sinful activities such as indulging in liquor, killing of a brahmana, cow, father or mother etc., the chanting of the Holy Name is the best means of deliverance. The reason being is that Lord Vishnu looks favorably upon such a chanter thinking him as His own devotee and as a result, protects him. Nevertheless, we should be vigilant that after hearing such glories of the Holy Name that one be never implicated in offences to the Holy Name as committing sins on the strength of the Holy Name, nor should one think that all this is simply an exaggeration of the glories of the Holy Name.

Once, in his youth Sriman Mahaprabhu immediately rushed to purify himself in the Ganges, hearing one student blaspheming the Holy Name who thought that the Holy Name's glories were exaggerated. Anantadev, although glorifying the Holy Name with countless mouths, cannot possibly reach the limit of such glories. In this light, the fact that the Name in the clearing stage can remove all the sins is not astonishing. A single name of Sri Krishna has the power to remove all the sins one can possibly commit. If anybody disbelieves this point then he commits a great sin to the lotus feet of the personified Name and no results will accrue from his chanting. Conversely, belief in the revealed scriptures will lead to fixed faith in the Holy Name.

The mercy of the spiritual master and the pure devotees causes the reinforced faith in the name of the Lord in the form of planting the seedling of devotion. After the seed is planted

in the midst of the heart one should hear constantly from the lips of the saintly persons thus watering the tender creeper of devotion. As the seed sprouts one should be careful not to upset the plant. This could take place as a result of the mad elephant offence or the offence against the great devotees of the Lord. We have to be careful that all unnecessary weeds in the form of impediments to the devotional service like desires for sense enjoyment or liberation, illegal mixing with the opposite sex, fame, distinction or prestige do not affect us. The only means at our disposal to counteract the above vile activities is the association of the saintly persons and the chanting of the Holy Name as recommended by Sriman Mahaprabhu. In watering this tender creeper, one should practice hearing and chanting the Holy Name with continued remembrance of the pure devotees and the Supreme Lord at every moment. The mature stage of this devotional practice will fill the heart of the striving devotee with unending bliss.

Sriman Mahaprabhu's instruction on the chanting of the Holy Name is both for beginners as well as for the elevated devotee. If the Holy Name could liberate the sinful person, Ajamila by accidental chanting of the holy syllables in *namabhasa*, what to speak of those devotees who chant sincerely and without offence to the Name?

*nikhila sruti mauli ratnamala
dyuti nirajita pada pankajanta
ayi mukta kulair upasyamanam
paritastvam harinama samsrayami*

"The bejeweled necklace (Upanishads) on the personified scriptures worship the tips of Your toe nails by their effulgent hue and liberated souls are fully engaged in worshipping You, Oh Holy Name! I therefore take full shelter of You."

THE GLORIES OF THE HOLY NAME

It has been stated in the *Brhad-Naradiya Purana* (38.325):

*harer nama harer nama harer namaiva kevalam
kalau nastyeva nastyeva nastyeva gati anyatha*

"In the age of Kali the only possible way for salvation is the chanting of the Holy Name. There is no other way! There is no other way! There is no other way!"

Lord Gaurasundara, the incarnation of the Supreme Lord who eradicates the sins of Kali Yuga, has commented on this verse, which has been explained in the section of the *Chaitanya Charitamrta* (C.C. Adi 37.22-25).

Sri Krishna has incarnated as the Holy Name in this age of Kali to deliver the fallen souls of this age. "First, in this verse the chanting of the Holy Name has been emphasized three times for the ordinary conditioned souls to understand the importance of chanting the Holy Name. Next, the word 'eva' has been mentioned again for the benefit of impressing this fact upon the dull understanding of the materialistic living beings. The word 'kevala' has been specially used to place further emphasis on this chanting process alone. In the denotation of the refrain 'nahi', three times speculative knowledge, mystic yoga and austerity have been rejected all together and the additional word 'eva' warns disbelievers and those who speculate on other ways of salvation that especially for them there will be no question of liberation."

The Holy Name of Sri Krishna, the transcendental form of Sri Krishna, and the deity form, all being transcendental in nature, are classified within the conception of nondual knowledge. Krishna is non-different from His form and Holy Name, while the names, form and personalities of the ordinary souls are variegated according to the different characteristic traits of each person. This is confirmed in *Chaitanya Charitamṛta* (Madhya, 17.131):

The actual identity of the Holy Name is described in the *Padma Purana* and *Vishnudharmottara*:

*nama cintamaniḥ kṛsnas caitanya-rasa-vigrahaḥ
pūmah suddho nityamukto abhinnavam-nama-naminoh*

"The Holy Name of Sri Krishna is the transcendental wish-fulfilling gem and non-different from Sri Krishna Himself, and the form of divine consciousness in the highest of mellows. Always complete in Itself, It cannot be divided into different pieces like ordinary material objects. It is always transcendental and completely liberated and therefore can never be limited or restricted by any thing material."

For these reasons the form of the Holy Name and the Supreme Lord are non-different and represent the same unique absolute principle. Just as Lord Sri Krishna, the son of Nanda Maharaj of Vraja, is the one Absolute Truth and the repository of twelve loving mellows who can award all benedictions to His devotees, in this same way the Holy Name of Sri Krishna also represents the form of transcendental mellows and is beyond the range of ordinary material perceptions. It is the wish-fulfilling touchstone that gives all varieties of boons to the devotees.

The Holy Name contains the summum bonum of all transcendental qualities attributed to the Supreme Lord. As Sri Krishna is the possessor of all energies, likewise, the name of Krishna is invested with all these energies. For remembering the holy name of Sri Krishna there is no question of improper time or situation. As stated in *Chaitanya Charitamṛta*

(Antya, 20.18):

*khaite suite yatha tatha nama laya
desakala niyam nahi sarvasiddhi haya.*

The Vishnudharmottara has the following statement:

*na desaniyamas tasmin na kala-niyamas-tatha
no icchasta-adau nisedho 'sti sriharer namni lubdhaka.*

"In chanting the Holy Name there is no restriction regarding time or place and no barrier or prohibition regarding impurity. The Holy Name also has an additional and distinct quality of being more merciful than the Supreme Lord."

The Holy Name is self-sufficient and pure and is never able to be influenced or overcome by the material energy. The name, form, pastimes, and qualities of Sri Krishna are all transcendental, for this reason they cannot be understood by our normal outgoing material senses. If one can curb the normal inclinations of each of the senses from moving toward material sense objects altogether and instead learns to employ them all solely for the satisfaction of the senses of Sri Krishna, then in course of time one will begin to relish great bliss in positive engagement in this process of pure devotional service with purified senses. Finally, Sri Krishna reveals Himself to that person who is intensely eager to serve Him and automatically that fortunate person becomes able to obtain the service of Sri Krishna in person. At that stage, the overwhelmed devotee begins even to be critical of even the blinking of his eyes and laments in thinking what little devotion can be effected with two blinking eyes? He hankers for millions of eyes to perpetually view the Lord or prays for millions of such ears to hear the nectarine words from His divine mouth or the notes of His flute. For these reasons, *Padma Purana* has this supportive verse:

*atah sri krsnamadi na bhaved grahyamindriyaih
sevonmukhe hi jihvadau svayameva sphuratyadah*

(C.C.M37/106)

In the discussion on the truth of the Holy Name in his book *Jaiwa Dharma*, Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur has given descriptions on the two different categories of Holy Names, namely primary and secondary. He writes, 'The Lord's names that are linked with "material designations as in the case of being described as the creator 'srsti-karta', controller, or regulator of this universe, the ruler of the heart, *paramatma* etc. all are classified under the category of secondary names. Further, His names, which are not tinged with material modes, such as *Brahman*, are also similarly placed under the category of secondary names. All these secondary names of the Supreme Lord, though able to bestow unlimited fruits to the chanter, do not reward one with actual transcendental knowledge. The eternally existent, Holy Names, being beyond normal material time and space such as Narayana, Vasudeva, Janardana, Hrsikesa, Hari, Acyuta, Govinda, Gopala, and Rama are all present in the transcendental realm and are thus primary names". In the spiritual world, all these names are eternally present together with their particular individual transcendental form.

In the material world only very fortunate souls possessed of unalloyed attraction to the Holy Name by dint of pure devotion can be rewarded with the name always reverberating on their tongues. There is not a scent of the illusory potency in connection with the Holy Name. The Holy Name is endowed with all divine energies, and it specifically appears in this material world to dissipate all material illusion. For the conditioned souls in the material world there is no greater friend than this Holy Name.

The *Brhad Naradiya Purana* has declared, '*harer nama eva kevalam*' emphasizing that this is the only valid process in the age of Kali. The Name has an unlimited power. The conditioned souls burned by the fire of sinful activities have the sole recourse of the Holy Name to uproot all of their sins. As the *Garuda Purana* states:

*avasenapi yannamni kirtite sarva patakaih
puman vimucyete sadyah simhatrastair mrgairiva*

"The helpless person who takes to the loud chanting of the Holy Name can vanquish all his sins instantaneously just as the roaring of the lion in the forest makes all the small beasts run away in fear. The person who takes shelter of the Holy Name can mitigate all his unhappiness and miseries." Further, in the statement of the *Skanda Purana* below:

*adhayovyadhayo yasya smaranan nama kirtanat,
tadaiva vilayam yanti tamanantam namamy 'ham*

"I pay my obeisances to that omnipotent Lord Ananta. Remembering and chanting His holy name can immediately vanquish all of one's miseries and troubles."

The person who chants the Holy Name constantly can also purify himself together with all his ancestors. From *Brahmanda Purana*:

*mahapataka yukto 'pi kirtayan na anisam harim
suddhanta karano bhutva jayate pankti-pavanah.*

"Even the most sinful person who takes constantly to the chanting of the Holy Name can be relieved of all his various miseries and be able to raise his present status to that of a *brahmana* (twice born)."

In the *Brhad Vishnu Purana*, we have:

*sarvarogopasamah sarvopadravanasanam
santidam sarvaristanam harernamanukirtanam*

"Chanting the Holy Name steadily dissipates all the ailments and impending obstructions to ultimately achieve auspiciousness for the chanter".

One who always chants the Holy Name will not be obstructed in any way by the forces of Kali, as *Brhad Naradiya Purana*:

*hare kesava govinda vasudeva jaganmaya
itirayanti ye nityam na hi tan vadhate kalih*

"The personification of Kali can never wield any influence upon him who constantly chants Hare, Kesava, Govinda, Vasudev." Simply by listening attentively to the Holy Name one can be saved from hellish lives as *Narasimha Purana*:

*yatha yatha harer nama kirtayanti sma narakah
tatha tatha harau bhaktim udhvanto divam yayuh*

"Solely by the chanting of the Holy Name, sinful people wherever they may be have attained to devotion and finally achieved the transcendental realm."

The conditioned souls suffering intense misery in this age of Kali have as their best friend in the Holy Name. There is no other way to free oneself from the effects of the illusory energy except by exclusively surrendering one's mind, body and speech in the merciful, shelter of the Holy Name. Lord Gaurasundara, the incarnation for this Kali Yuga, has especially appeared as a devotee in order to teach us the method of taking shelter of the Holy Name. This chanting of the Holy Name is the religious principle of the highest order and means of self-realization as propagated by Lord Gauranga. The Lord has invested all his energies in the Name and has assured us that the Name can confer on us all perfections. Therefore, ignoring all the doubts normally caused by the natural accepting and rejecting tendencies of the mind, one should take shelter of the Holy Name with great enthusiasm.

One should follow in the path chalked out by the great souls without any tinge of doubt. Sriman Mahaprabhu, the Supreme Lord Himself, has set the model example while enunciating this path. Further, His sincere confidential associates like the six goswamis and Srila Haridas Thakur have stood up as the shining examples in demonstrating the real method of the chanting the Holy Name.

Of the unlimited devotional practices, there are sixty-four principal limbs of devotion. Among those, are five main limbs

stand out as the most superior and these have been verified by Srila Rupa Goswami and His devoted follower Srila Krishna Das Kaviraj namely association of saintly persons, chanting the Holy Name, hearing the holy *Bhagavata*, residence in Mathura and worship of the holy deity of the Lord. Then again Sriman Mahaprabhu has instructed Sanatan Goswami in His teachings that chanting of the Holy Name is the most important of these five limbs. The nine forms of devotional practice being surcharged with all the Supreme Lord's potencies are the processes recommended in order to attain love of Godhead. The strict practice of the ninefold practice of devotion eventually leads to love of God, which can ultimately allow one actual association with the Supreme Lord. However, chanting of the Holy Name can very quickly endow us with love of Godhead. The Supreme Lord who is subjugated by love will then very quickly show His actual form to the loving devotee, eventually accepting all his loving services in the spiritual world.

The Vedas, which are highest natural evidence of the religious path, have demonstrated the excellence of the Holy Name with the verse:

*om asya jananto nama cidvivaktan mahaste
visno sumatim bhajamahe om tat sat*

(RigVeda 1/3 /156)

This verse has been stated in Srila Jiva Goswami's *Bhagavad Sandarbha* (section 49), *Hari Bhakti Vilas* section (11.276) and the same in the commentary by Srila Visvanath Chakravati Thakur on the *Srimad Bhagavatam* (8.3.8-9) verse quoted below beginning with:

he visnu tava nama citśvarupam sahaprakasanupam

"Oh Master! Your Name being the form of the holy syllables (*pranava*) is transcendental or naturally self-illuminating. Therefore, even if one in the slightest way does not understand the glories of chanting the Name simply by the mere attempt of the

practice of chanting the holy syllables repeatedly will still ensure the sprouting of spiritual knowledge and devotion. The chanting of the Holy Name even in the state when one is influenced by great fear or the in the state of intense enmity to the Lord, can also award liberation."

The reason is that the chanting of the Holy Name even when performed unwittingly can induce liberation by virtue of the shadow name in the clearing stage of offences (*namabhasa*). The scriptures have repeatedly confirmed the glories of the Holy Name (*HariVamsa*):

*vede ramayane caiva purane bharate tatha
adavante ca madhye ca harih sarvatra giyate*

"From the beginning, middle, and to the end the *Vedas*, *Ramayana*, and *Mahabharata* have at all times solely glorified Lord Hari."

In the *Bhagavad Gita* (15.15), Lord Krishna tells Arjuna,

*vedaisca sarvam aham evavedyo
vedanta krd vedavideva caham*

"I am known by all the *Vedas*, the end of all the *Vedas* as well as the compiler of all such *Vedas*. I without exception know the purpose of all the *Vedas*."

In the same verse (*Gita* 1.33-34) Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur has written, 'Lord Krishna's form is transcendental. When the conditioned soul adores either My indirect form or the minute or colossal dimensions of such an indirect form then this only demonstrates their conditioned state of intelligence but does not reveal My most superior mood. My superior form is most extraordinary and beyond of this world in contrast to My impersonal form, which manifests from my inconceivable energy and may appear at one time all-enveloping while at the same time can become smaller than the most minute particle. Thus by the power of My inconceivable energy I manifest My form.'

The ignorant and foolish people decry this transcendental form of Mine contending that it is material and hence becomes entangled or bound by material nature. Such foolish people can never realize that this form is the support of all creation. They have been bewildered by their ignorance caused by their entanglement in the material nature to cast a trifle designation for Me. However, those whose knowledge having been awakened can understand My eternal form of bliss and knowledge.

How have these people become deluded in the first place? These foolish people have been bewildered by their inherent ignorant and passionate natures, because of which all their vain hopes, knowledge and works consequently go to naught. Being desirous of the will of wisp of heavenly pleasures, they become immersed quickly in such fruitive activities. However, in such futile endeavors they can never attain to pure transcendental knowledge. In deviant attempts for seeking knowledge they more or less become deluded by impersonalism, thereby losing all the essence of real knowledge. At this juncture, they think that My form (Sri Krishna) is subject to change by the illusory energy (*maya*) and ultimately consider Brahman as the highest principle and the all-including controller (*Isvara*) as without true reality or substance. They also consider the worship of the creator (*Isvara*) and the simultaneous purification of mind as a stage in the attainment of the final Brahman. In actual fact, the result of all the futile endeavors of these people will be the development of a demoniac mentality and the immanent loss of all contact with the true divinity within themselves.'

"Oh Partha! The discriminating person who has realized Me is a great soul (*mahatma*). They take unalloyed shelter of My divine energy and worship My personal form as Krishna with firm faith, knowing it to be the highest goal of all the living entities neglecting trivial fruitive works, and dry speculative knowledge related with impersonalism etc."

The path of such worship is further described: 'The realized souls constantly glorify My name, form, qualities and

pastimes and practice the nine limbs of devotion beginning with hearing and chanting. They cultivate devotional service to me to earnestly obtain eternal servitude to Me as the transcendental form of bliss and knowledge, constantly offering all their bodily, mental, social and spiritual activities with determination. They are not affected by material fruitive activities but instead practice intense devotional service to Me in a surrendered mood. As (B.Geeta 9/14)

*satatam kirtayanto mam yatantas ca drdha vratah
namasyantas ca mam bhaktya nitya yuktam upasate*

For the above verse Srila Visvanatha Chakravarti Thakur has commented, "the great souls worship Me with an undivided mind." In which way is the worship conducted? This is what the verse explains. He takes to the chanting of the Holy Name without interruption. The word '*satatam*' allows no barrier or restriction regarding time, place and circumstances by which devotion can be practiced and executed at all times."

In *Hari Bhakti Vilas* there is a supporting verse quoted from *Vishnudharmottara*: "for an aspirant soul, there is no consideration of time or place in the chanting of the Holy Name of Lord Hari. Impure situations such as chanting when one's mouth is unclean or any other impure circumstances are not prohibited or disallowed. '*Yatantah*' means one who endeavors to determine My transcendental form and qualities."

The meaning of endeavor in this context is best illustrated by the example as follows: "Just as the poor householder in order to maintain his wife and children goes to the houses of known rich persons to amass wealth, similarly the devotees of the Lord Krishna, in pursuance of pure devotion, seek the association and assembly of saintly people to acquire the wealth of devotion. Having finally received the mercy of the devotees, they practice the limbs of devotional life such as chanting and hearing the Holy Name over and over again similar to the way one repeats the study of the revealed scriptures. They then keep fixed count

or daily schedule of chanting rigidly on their beads, offer obeisances to the Lord, the spiritual master, and the Vaisnavas as a daily function, and practice devotional service while conducting their daily duties and work without fail. They also devotedly follow vows like *ekadasi* in an unbroken manner while bowing down to Me constantly."

The syllable 'ca' after 'namasyantas' signifies the inclusion of other devotional activities such as hearing and serving the lotus feet of Lord Krishna in an effort to acquire pure devotion. The word *nitya -yukta* denotes that devotees aspiring to have an eternal relation with the Supreme Lord worship Him through rigid devotional practice. The suffix '*ukta*' is meant both for the present and the timeless past. Therefore, My devotees repeatedly worship Me by glorifying My name, form, qualities and pastimes through the processes of hearing, chanting and remembering. Conclusively, it can be inferred that chanting and like processes is the real way to worship the Lord. It is to be noted that the word 'mam'—'Me', has been purposely repeated twice. In the same verse (Gita 10.9), the Lord defines devotion as:

*mad citta mad gata prana bodhayantah parasparam
kathayantas ca mam nityam tusyanti ca ramanti ca*

The behavior of the unalloyed devotees is as follows, "after surrendering their minds to Me completely My devotees are always conversing with one another about My loving pastimes and experience great bliss in such reciprocation. In this way, by the constant regulated devotional practices of hearing and chanting they are filled with the bliss of devotion and reaching to the platform of the spontaneous loving state they reciprocate with Me in the different loving mellows to the point of conjugal love as exhibited by the residents of Vraja Dhama."

Srila Visvanath Chakravarti Thakur has given the commentary for this specific verse, The Lord has said, 'After obtaining My mercy in the form of spiritual intelligence and discrimination My unalloyed devotees steadily begin to understand the

truth of My qualities and pastimes. For this reason the word, 'mat citta' has been used to mean very greedy to taste the sweetness of My form, qualities and pastimes. 'Mad gata prana' means without Me, it is impossible to maintain his life air, just as it is said it is impossible for ordinary people to survive without taking grains. 'Bodhayantah' means discussing My different forms and types of devotion constantly and participating in the blissful performance of the loud congregational chanting of the Holy Name, ultimately qualifying for spontaneous devotion.'

In this way, hearing, chanting, and remembering have been declared as the most important limbs of devotion. The secret is only by this sort of devotional practice can one be really satisfied and enjoy blissful life. By regulated devotional practice if one can conduct devotions without any obstacle then natural contentment will steadily result progressing finally in the liberated state to meditation on the conjugal loving pastimes in the association with the Supreme Lord. All this takes place as a matter of course in the development of spontaneous devotions. In the verse *Bhagavad Gita* (11.33.):

*sthane hrsikesa tava prakirtya
jagat prahrasyatyā-anurajyate ca
raksamsi bhitani diso dravanti
sarve namasyanti ca siddhasanghah*

The prayer of Sri Arjuna goes, "Oh Hrsikesa! The world in hearing Your unlimited glories, become overjoyed, all the demoniac forces run away in different directions in fear while all the perfected souls pay obeisances to You, being the proper activities for each according to their station."

Srila Bhaktivinode Thakur comments as follows, "This verse depicts that the devotees become completely attracted and satisfied by the process of glorifying the Lord in being able to satisfy the senses of the Lord while the demons being completely averse and in deep opposition to Him run away out of fear in the different directions. The perfect souls bow down in

obeisances to Him." The word '*sthane*' illustrates the diverse moods of the various classes as above. This verse is important in context with mantras that can award protection. In conclusion the *Gita*, which reveals the end of the Vedas has properly elucidated the glories of chanting the Holy Name as above. The *Mahabharata* is known as fifth Veda, because it contains the essence of the Vedas of which the *Gita* is included in a complete manner. The *Gita* can be said to be the conclusion of all the scriptures. Conclusively, the *Gita* also clearly verifies the glories of the chanting of the Holy Name of the Lord.

Srila Krishnadas Kaviraj has described in his *Chaitanya Charitamrita* (*Madhya* 9.19-38) that while Sriman Mahaprabhu was touring the holy places of pilgrimage, at one point He happened to cite the glories of the Holy Name of Sri Krishna to a certain brahmana. Even though Sri Krishna is non-other than Vrajendranandana and Rama is the son of King Dasaratha they are both non-different as the only one absolute truth and are to be understood as such.

The Supreme Lord in His incarnation as Rama undertook the pastime of killing the demon Ravana. In comparison, Sri Krishna had carried out the highest conjugal pastimes demonstrating the quintessence of all divine sports. Since, the pastimes of Lord Rama were tinged with formal religious morality and social decorum, for this reason the name of Lord Krishna has been given more weight.

On His visit to the Siddhabada pilgrimage site, Sriman Mahaprabhu used to occasionally view the transcendental deity of Sri Sri Sita-Rama. At that place, a brahmana who was an ardent devotee of Lord Rama, invited Him to his home for lunch. On that day Sriman Mahaprabhu stayed in the house of that brahmana and after partaking His meals and sufficiently blessing him then took His leave to visit other holy places of pilgrimage. This brahmana had the practice of constantly taking the holy name of Rama. Generally, other than chanting of the holy syl-

lables 'Rama, Rama, Rama'—nothing else was ever uttered by him. Sriman Mahaprabhu continuing His travels, obtained the vision of the deity of Skandha at that same pilgrimage site, and also visited Trimath to see Lord Vamana.

Later, when Sriman Mahaprabhu returned to Siddhabad to the former brahmana's house, He was surprised to find him now chanting the name of Sri Krishna instead of Rama. After honoring His meal at the brahmana's house He then inquired from him querously, ' why do you now chant Sri Krishna instead of Lord Rama?'

The brahmana replied, "Oh Master! My contact with You has somehow changed my nature that from birth was to chant, 'Rama' and now instead this has been replaced with the impulse to chant the name 'Krishna'. Your inspiring divine presence has automatically enforced the chanting of the name of Sri Krishna on my lips. From childhood it has been a habit of mine to amass scriptures describing the glories of the Holy Name. Once, I noticed the particular eighth verse in the composition of 108 Names of Lord Rama that had the derivative of the meaning of the word 'Rama' as follows:

*ramante yogino anante satyanande cid atmani
iti ramapadenasau param brahma abhidiyate*

"The perfect yogis revel in bliss in that transcendental Supreme Truth. For this reason the Supreme Brahman is described as Lord Rama."

He continued, "from the Mahabharata commentary of Srila Sridhara Swami (Udyoga Parva 71.4) the etymological meaning of the word 'Krishna' has been stated as follows:

*krsirbhuvacakah sabdho nasca nivrtti vacakah
trayoraikyam parabrahma krsna ity abhidyate*

Krs' means He who attracts and 'na' stands for the supreme bliss. The complete word 'Krsna' which is the combination of these two syllables defines the Supreme Brahman who is all

attractive and full of the highest bliss. The two sound vibrations namely 'Rama' and 'Krsna' are similar in the sense that they both represent the supreme principle. However, in the consideration of mellows of pastimes there are basic differences. In the *Padma Purana* (verse 9) where the 108 names of Lord Rama are described and in the *Mahabharata*, (*Uttara Khanda*, 72nd chapter) the last verse in the *Visnu-Sahasranam* prayers declares that one single name of Lord Rama is equal to one thousand names of Lord Visnu.'

*rama rameti rameti rame rame manorame
sahasranamabhistulyam ramanama varanane*

"Oh lovely one! The word 'Rama' is so pleasing, that it makes me filled with joy. One name of 'Rama' is equal to one thousand names of Lord Visnu."

"Further, by comparison with the *Brahmanda Purana* we learn that three names of Rama are equal to one name of Lord Krishna. As illustrated by the verse below:

*sahasra namnam punyanam trivavrtya tu yat phalam-
ekavrtya tu krsnasya namaikam tat prayacchati*

The fruit of chanting the holy names of Lord Visnu (one thousand names) thrice can be obtained simply by chanting one single name of Sri Krishna.

Therefore, in relation to the former verse it can be said alternatively that the fruit of chanting the holy name of Rama three times is obtained by the single utterance of the name of Sri Krishna. Though this extraordinary evidence in scriptures proved the efficacy of the name of Sri Krishna, I could not then accept it because my worshipping deity was Lord Ramacandra. It was only by His name that I had derived such great happiness that I used to chant the names of Rama day and night but now by Your fortunate association the name of Sri Krishna has automatically manifested in me together with my renewed faith in scriptural evidence. I am now convinced that You are non-

other than Sri Krishna Himself for only Sri Krishna has the power to award the gift of His Holy Name. This is also the reason of my constantly being absorbed in singing the name of Sri Krishna with devotion" (C.C., *Madhya* 9.37).

After Srīman Mahāprabhu had favored the brahmana in this manner He went on to visit other places of pilgrimage such as Vṛddha Kāśī etc.

Srīla Rupa Goswami in his *Bhaktirasamṛtasindhu*, *Purva Vibhaga* or *Sadhana Bhakti Lahari* (verse 32) has written:

*siddhanta tribhed api sṛṣṭa kṛṣṇasvarūpayoh
rasenotkṛṣyete kṛṣṇarūpameśa rasasthitiḥ*

"There is no difference between the form of Sri Krishna and Narayana, however the excellence of Sri Krishna's pastimes are clearly exhibited in His uncommon conjugal loving pastimes." In this way the principle of difference in mellows (*rasas*) is established.

In Sri Rāgam, Lord Gaurāṅga had spoken to Venkatta Bhaṭṭa, "Sri Krishna is the original Supreme Personality of Godhead and the original form of truth. Lord Narayana is His expansion (*vilāsa*) playing a different role. For this very reason Sri Laxmi Devī and others are very attracted to Lord Krishna. In contrast, the Lord of Vāikunṭha, Sri Narayana, can never attract the mind of the cowherd damsels of Vṛndāvana. What to speak of Narayana! Once Sri Krishna Himself, to tease the cowherd women, came disguised as the four-handed Lord Narayana but unfortunately, the gopīs, in seeing that form were not in the least bit interested."

"Narayana has a total of sixty exemplary qualities. In addition to those, Lord Krishna has four other distinguishing traits, which are uncommon and not present in any other expansions. He exhibits many extraordinary pastimes; He is surrounded by His beloved devotees in reciprocal exchange of loving dealings; He attracts the three worlds with the sound of His flute and

song; He possess unparallel personal beauty which is second to none meaning that His pastimes are unique and override all others even Lord Narayana. Thus, His beautiful form, loving dealings, extraordinary pastimes, and flute bewilder and attract even Srimati Laxmi Devi who is always situated in the mood of reverence. However, in light of these conclusions one should never differentiate between the two Lords Sri Krishna and Narayana, or for that matter - Laxmi Devi and Srimati Radhika."

As Srīman Mahāprabhu declares briefly in the *Chaitanya Charitamrita* (M.9/108-157):

*gopi-dvare lakshmi kare krshnasangasvada
iswaratve bheda manile haya aparadha
eka isvara bhaktera dhyana anurupa
ekai vigrahe kare nana kara rupa*

As stated in *Laghu Bhagavatamṛta*, Purva Khanda
condensed from *Narada Pancaratra*:

*munir yatha vibhagena nila pita adibhir yutah,
rupa bhedam avapnoti dhyana-bhedat tatha acyutah*

"A crystal reflects light according to the presence of the different articles that are in its proximity. The same crystal manifests as either blue or yellow, consistent with the nature of the reflecting substratum. Similarly, each devotee, by his own mood worships the one Supreme Lord in myriad forms of contemplation."

Srila Bhaktivinod Thakur writes, "As Krishna and Narayana are non-different, in the same way Lakshmi Devi and Srimati Radharani are non-different. Sri Radhika manifests different forms that are all Her expansions. Sri Lakshmi, in the form of the cowherd damsels, relishes Her association with Sri Krishna as the gopis in their conjugal pastimes with Krishna. Conversely, Lakshmi relishes Her normal relationship with Narayana in the mood of awe and reverence. There is no difference between Krishna and Narayana as far as the principle of Isvara

(Controller) is concerned. The differences in outlook of the devotees is mainly due to the varied devotional moods of the devotees of the Lord whereby the one Supreme Truth manifests in manifold ways in relation with them."

The second verse of Sriman Mahaprabhu instructions (Siksastaka) is described:

*namnam akari bahudha nija sarva saktis
tatarpita niyamitah smarane na kalah
etadrsi tava krpa bhagavan mamapi
durdaivam idrsam ihajani nanuragah*

"Oh Lord! Your holy name presents all auspiciousness to the living entities. For this reason You are present in innumerable names like Krishna and Govinda. In these names, You have invested all of Your energies and there is no specific time or other hard and fast regulations restricting the chanting of the Holy Name as they are irrespective of all of such factors. Oh Lord! You have made it easy for all to chant this Holy Name but it is my ill-fortune that I have no attraction for Your Holy Name."

Srila Krishnadas Kaviraj Goswami has commented that in eating or sleeping one can chant the Holy Name and there is no restriction in this regard. It can award all perfections as it has been endowed with all potencies.

The Holy Name when chanted purely can give rise to the awakening of pure love of Godhead. In conjunction with this statement the most important part of chanting the Holy Name is to chant with humility as illustrated by the teachings of Lord Gauranga (Siksastaka, 3). Srila Krishnadas Kaviraj has explained this with clarity:

*tmad api sunicena taror api sahisnuna
amanina manadena kirtaniyah sada harih.*

"One who is humbler than the straw in the street, more tolerant than the tree, not expecting respect from others, but giv-

ing respects to all others is a fit candidate to constantly chant the holy name of the Lord."

One should always be very meek and humble—being humbler than the straw and more tolerant than the tree. The tree is the model example of tolerance for when it is cut it does not protest and when it is on the verge of being dried up due to lack of water it does not ask for water. Nevertheless, it willingly gives its fruits to all and at the same time, with great fortitude withstands severe heat and cold and protects others from the same influences. In this way, the devotee is without any trace of false prestige but gives all respects to others knowing that Sri Krishna is present in the hearts of all living entities. Those who take the Holy Name, maintaining such pure conduct, will attain devotion at the lotus feet of Sri Krishna. The symptom of such a devotee is that he is always mourning his absence of love for Sri Krishna (C.C. A.20.28). In conclusion, without having the above four favorable qualities required for the practice of chanting the Holy Name it will be very difficult for one to attain love of Sri Krishna.

The symptom of devotion is that one who has even a trace of devotion in his heart will never exhibit any trace of egoism or false pride in any manner whatsoever. He will never attempt to pass off at any time as a high devotee. He will always remain satisfied, chanting the Holy Name, at the same time being very humble and tolerant, give up all false pride, and never expect honor but rather giving honor in return to all others. By following such an example one will definitely be able to achieve devotion at the lotus feet of Sri Krishna. Conclusively, Sriman Mahaprabhu has taught us all how to chant the Holy Name but if one does not strive to chant in that prescribed manner then how can he obtain the real wealth of chanting the Holy Name?

The essence of *Vedanta* or the *Srimad Bhagavatam* has also elaborately described the glories of the Holy Name. The sixth canto of the holy *Bhagavatam* describes the story of Ajamila.

There was once a twice-born youth in the province of Kanyakubja named Ajamila who was very proficient in the scriptures and of good, moral conduct. Unfortunately, due to his previous bad reactions from work he became attracted to a lowly sudra lady of bad character and as a result completely deviated from his previous code of good conduct. He produced ten children from the womb of this woman of which the youngest was named Narayana. He thereby spent his whole life in all types of obnoxious activities for maintaining his wife and children with such ill-acquired fortune.

Even at the elderly age of eighty-eight he was still very much attached to home and family, especially to his youngest son Narayana. The time of death at last finally approached the materially engrossed Ajamila. However, at that time he was preoccupied in the contemplation of his dearest son. People usually engage in sinful activities through the three agencies of their mind, body and words. Consequently, at the time of death three grotesque messengers of Hell descended to drag the sinner Ajamila to the kingdom of Lord Yama for atonement of all his sins. Ajamila became very fearful in seeing these ghostly figures and spontaneously began to call for his son 'Narayana'. Nevertheless, by the presence of his previously accumulated good activities the address to his son awakened his remembrance of the four-armed Lord of Vaikuntha, Narayana.

Thus, hearing the four syllables addressing their master, four confidential associates of Vaikuntha also descended to that same very spot. In the ensuing verbal debate between the Yamadutas and the Lord's associates, the Yamadutas were defeated in regard as to what really constituted religious principles as opposed to mere formal ritualistic religion. They were fortunately informed and became aware of the immutable power of the Lord's holy name. The premise of the Yamadutas was that Ajamila had been engaged in performing sinful activities throughout the course of his degraded life, in this regard he had to be rightly punished for not having performed any atone-

ment for such improper attachment to sinful activities. In defense, the Vishnudutas merely replied, (S.B.6/2/7)

*ayam hi krta nirveso janma kotyam-ahasamapi
yad vyahajara vivaso nama svastyanam hareh*

“Actually, it is not only that Ajamila has atoned for this life’s sinful activities but on the contrary, millions of births of sins have been effaced due to the fact that he had called on the name of the Supreme Lord, Narayana in an offenceless manner by which not only did he atone for all his sins but has opened the door to liberation by such an utterance.”

*etenaiva aghonasya krtam syadaghaniskrtam
yada narayanayeti jagad caturaksaram*

(S.B.6.2.8)

“At some previous time, when Ajamila had beckoned his young son to eat he had then chanted the name of Narayana in an offenseless manner by which all the sinful reactions combined in previous lives had already been completely atoned for.”

*stenah surapo mitradrug brahmaha gurutalpagah
str-raja-pitr-gohanta ye ca patakino 'pare
sarvesam apyagah vatamidam eva suniskritam
namavyaharanam visno yatstadvisaya matih*

(S.B.6.2.9-10)

“One who steals gold, who betrays his friends, the killer of a brahmana, who performs sexual intercourse with the wife of his guru, who kills a woman, kills his parents or for that matter, the king, even all such grievous sinners can be rectified or purified by the chanting of the holy name of Visnu.”

The reason is that when one chants the Holy Name of the Supreme Lord, the Lord considers him to be His own servant and takes it as His bounden duty to protect him in all respects. *Srimad Bhagavatam* (6.2.11.) states:

*na niskrtair uditair brahmavadibhih
tatha visuddhya atyaghavan vratadibhih
yatha harinama padair udahrtaih
tad uttamasloka ginopalambakam*

"The chanting of the Holy Name is so purifying that even severe vows and atonement according to the codes of the Manu are not as effective in regard to actual purification of the heart. The efficacy of the name of the Supreme Lord is incomparable in its opulence, sweetness, and beauty, in contrast to severe austerities such as the Candrayana vow which will never be able to root out instantly the latent tendency to sin."

*naikantikam tadhi krte' pi niskrte
manah punar dhavati cet asatpathe
tad karma niharam abhipsatam hare-
gunanuvadah khalu sattva bhavanah*

(S.B.6/2/12)

"The mind can never be completely purified by atonement for even after the atonement the mind again spontaneously recurs to the wrong path. Therefore, those who desire to completely eradicate sin at its root, for them the name of Sri Hari is the best form of atonement. This has the ability to completely destroy ignorance altogether and purify the heart."

In this regard Srila Chakravarti Thakur comments, "Proper rectification is that after hearing the glories of the Holy Name from others one is to continually practice repeating this Name. The associates of Lord Visnu forbade the messengers of hell by saying that that this person Ajamila has chanted the Holy Name effectively during his death throes and that all his previous sinful activities had already been dissipated. Therefore, they were forbidden to take him along the path to hell."

The discussion of how Ajamila managed to eradicate his sins and the different types of chanting in *namabhasa* have been discussed by the transcendental messengers of Vaikuntha with this verse:

*sanketyam parihasyam stobham helanam evava,
vaikuntha namagrahana asesha aghaharam vidhuh*

(S.B. 6.2.14)

"One who in total ignorance of the Holy Name calls for his son unwittingly or when while teasing others in jest repeats the name, also in the case of chanting the holy name in utter neglect and lastly chanting in order to nourish one's musical temperament can in these ways complete eradicate all his previous sinful reactions." (*namabhasa*)

These types of chanting are classified under *namabhasa* or the stage when all the offences to the Holy Name have been cleared. Ajamila addressed his young son by the name Narayana that is also the holy name of the Supreme Lord of Vaikuntha. The name which when uttered does not again lead the heart to being defiled by sinful reactions is called the clearing stage of offences or *namabhasa*.

One great devotee has mentioned that from the time of the name giving ceremony of Narayana, the son of Ajamila, the *namabhasa* had already been effected by Ajamila. This example cannot be extended to all but only in certain special cases like that of Ajamila. The Holy Name chanted in a teasing manner (*parihasa*) but which is not in an offensive vein can be considered as *namabhasa*. 'Stobha' refers to when, without offensive intention, one sings the Holy Name to satisfy his musical instincts. Next, as when one chants neglectfully, (*helanam*) or in a careless manner such as during sleep or in recreation. In a helpless stage if one chants the Holy Name with faith then he will not have to undergo any hellish bodies in the future.

As *Srimad Bhagavatam* (6.2.35) confirms: If one falls from a high building or slips on a pathway, breaks his limbs, gets bitten by a snake, becomes infected with severe disease, or gets beaten by a stick, that person who chants the name of Lord Hari during these types of ordeal will never take to other hellish bodies for suffering.

In this injunction, there is one significant point in that the great saints have proclaimed that for great sins, severe methods of atonement have to be effected while for light sins correspondingly lighter measures of atonement have been prescribed. Atonement through this type of injunction is not applicable in the case of chanting the Holy Name, which is the best remedy. In all cases the reason is that even in the very thought of remembering the Holy Name all sins are immediately vanquished.

guruna ca laghunam ca garuni ca laghuni ca...

(S.B.6/2/16),

Srila Visvanath Cakravati Thakur writes, "If we say that very grievous sins requires more severe austerities for proper atonement as prescribed by the scriptures, how then can we conceive that simply one Holy Name in *abhasa* can destroy the sum total of the most hideous sinful activities? The laws of Manu prescribe atonement according to the degree of the severity of a sinful action requiring more intense austerities to be performed for effecting atonement for heavier sins. On the contrary, the inconceivable great potency of the Lord, which has been invested in the Holy Name is that merely by a fraction of that power of the Holy Name, all great sinful reactions are dissipated. The example is given that just to rescue Sambhu from the great Kaurava army headed by Duryodhana, simply one powerful person Balabhadra (Balarama) was sent who could very easily destroy the opposition single-handedly. Similarly, austerity, charity, and vows may invariably serve to reduce all sins to nil but because they are only executed by ritual work in terms of standard religious conduct they cannot wipe away the residual contamination of the heart. In other words, the sinful tendencies are never completely uprooted. Only, in the service to the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord through hearing and chanting of the Lord's glories and execution of devotional services can this be completely uprooted."

As stated in *Bhagavata* (6.2.18): "Just as the fire burns up grass instantly, in that manner, knowingly or unknowingly if one chants the Holy Name of Lord Hari he will be completely able to burn all reactions of his sinful activities."

The example is given of a sick man who does not understand the potency of the prescribed medicine but readily drinks it, will be able to understand the beneficial value of the medicine. Similarly by the chanting the Holy Name the ignorant man will come to understand of its actual potency. The medicine does not wait for his faith in the medicine but manifests its potency instantaneously on being consumed. It is not that the Holy Name only eradicates all sinful reactions for even in the clearing stage of offences all previous sinful activities have all ready been nullified step by step, paving the way for liberation. Ultimately in taking the shelter of the spiritual master and chanting the Holy Name without offences, the Name will very quickly bring one to the highest goal bestowing the wealth of pure devotion to the suitable recipient.



THE ART OF CHANTING THE HOLY NAME

(The following is a compilation of commentaries and instructions on Sri Nama and nama bhajan which were very dear to our spiritual master. Srila Gurudeva used to often recite most of these verses mentioned in his various conversations with us and had repeatedly told us the importance of all these verses. Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur has written that even for the novice who takes to the process of chanting the holy name of the Lord, meditation on the simple meanings of the syllables of the maha-mantra is an important feature of this practice. Srila Gopal Guru Goswami who was the disciple of Sri Swarupa Damodara, had compiled his commentaries for the maha-mantra that are very useful to those in the unalloyed shelter of nama bhajan.)

*hare krishna hare krishna krishna krishna hare hare
hare rama hare rama rama rama hare hare*

This is termed as the *Mahamantra* and consists of three main addresses: *Hare*, *Krishna*, and *Rama*. The Supreme Lord is the form of knowledge, eternity, and bliss. He is able to eradicate (*hara*) all ignorance and for this the term '*Hare*' seems an appropriate address for Him.

In the same sense, He who is adorned with such effulgent qualities being thus able to captivate the mind of Srimati Radharani and is thus known as Hari, He is addressed by Her as '*Hare*'. On the other hand, the pleasure potency of Krishna is Radha and conversely by virtue of the fact that She can captivate (*hara*) the mind of Krishna She is addressed as '*Hare*'. The son of king Nanda who has lotus-eyes and of dark-blue com-

plexion is referred to as Krishna who increases the bliss of the residents of Gokula also being the master of His pleasure potency Srimati Radhika. He is the sum total of all skill and wisdom, the Lord of all gods in spite of His humane pastimes. He, the Supreme Lord is eternally enjoying (*ramana*) conjugal pastimes with Srimati Radharani and for this reason is why He is also known as 'Rama

Commentary on the Mahamantra in the mood of awe and reverence

He destroys the three-fold afflictions and the millions of sins of countless of births of those devotees who remember Him and is therefore known as 'Hari'. Krishna is constituent of two syllables 'krs' and 'na', which means all attractive and joyful respectively. These, when combined refer to the all-attractive Supreme Lord who is the abode of bliss. The Yogis derive great joy meditating on Him as unlimited and the form of supreme bliss (*rama*) on the transcendental platform and for that reason, He is termed as 'Rama.'

The word 'Radha' originates from the verbal root '*rad*' which means the one who can bestow great joy or the highest happiness. Alternatively, one who serves Sri Krishna in the most superior, devotional manner is Radha."

Commentary of the Mahamantra in remembrance of the Divine Couple

The pleasure potency of Krishna is Sri Radha and because She can captivate the mind of the Supreme Lord Krishna She is known as Hara. The address for her (*hara*) is 'Hare'. The king of Vraja is known as Krishna, who by the sound of His flute attracts (*akarsan*) the cowherd damsels from their houses so much so that in the process they lose all their natural shame, religiosity, pride and composure. Again, He by the extraordinary beauty of His form is always able to surcharge the mind and the

five senses of the cowherd damsels with exulting bliss and for that very reason He is glorified as Rama.

COMMENTARY OF SRILA GOPALA GURU GOSWAMI

Hare: Oh Hare! Having captivated my mind please free me from the bondage of material existence.

Krishna: Please attract my mind to Your lotus feet Oh Krishna!

Hare: Oh Hare! Please captive my heart by your extraordinary sweetness.

Krishna: Oh Krishna! Please purify my heart with the gift of devotional knowledge through the agency of Your pure devotee.

Krishna: Oh Krishna! May You entrench me in the contemplation of Your divine name, form, qualities and pastimes.

Krishna: Oh Krishna! May I be able to acquire a taste (*ruci*) for Your transcendental name, form, and pastimes.

Hare: Oh Hare ! Though I am extremely unqualified, please benedict me with qualification for Your divine service.

Hare: Oh Hare! Please elevate me to be able to execute Your divine service.

Hare: Oh Hare! Please reveal to us Your confidential pastimes with Your beloved Sri Krishna.

Rama: Oh Rama! Please allow me to listen to Your confidential pastimes with Your beloved consort Radha.

Hare: Oh Hare! Please allow me to visualize Your confidential pastimes with Your beloved Sri Krishna.

Rama: Oh Rama! Please allow me to visualize Your confidential pastimes with Your beloved consort Radha.

Rama: Oh Rama! Please engage me in remembering Your holy name, qualities, and pastimes.

Rama: Oh Rama! By the above way in such remembrance, please qualify me to execute Your personal service.

Hare: Oh Hare! Please, by accepting me as Your own, include me in Your confidential (conjugal) pastimes.

Hare: Oh Hare! May I take part in your confidential (conjugal) pastimes.

SECOND PART OF COMMENTARY

Hare: The address to Srimati Radharani who steals (*hara*) the mind of Sri Krishna is 'Oh Hare'.

Krishna: Krishna means he who attracts (*akarsan*) the mind of Radharani. The address to the Lord is 'Oh Krishna!'.

Hare: She who causes Krishna to lose (*hara*) all His patience and modesty, or Srimati Radharani, the address to Her is 'Oh Hare'.

Krishna: He who attracts Srimati Radharani in such a way that She loses all Her shame and patience etc. the address to Him is 'Oh Hare!'.

Krishna: Wherever Srimati Radhika stands or goes She seems to see Sri Krishna touching Her forcibly (stealing Her consciousness). The address here is 'Oh Krishna!'.

Krishna: Srimati Radhika again ventures to the forest groves being attracted irresistibly by the flute of Krishna. The address here is 'Oh Krishna!'.

Hare: Wherever Sri Krishna stands or goes He seems to see Radha by Him in every direction and hence His consciousness (*hara*) becomes captivated by Her. The address to Her is 'Oh Hare!'.

Hare: Again, Krishna is diverted from His residence to meet her in a secret rendezvous. The address to Her, 'Oh Hare!'.

Hare: She who draws Krishna to the forest grooves of Vraja. The address to Her is, 'Oh Hare!'

Rama: Krishna who dalliances with His loving partner in many ways as in jest and glances. The address to Him is 'Oh Rama!'

Hare: She, Radha, causes Krishna to suddenly lose His equipoise in her association. The address to Her is 'Oh Hare!'

Rama: He enjoys His consort through confidential embraces etc. The address to Him is 'Oh Rama!'

Rama: Krishna is He who enjoys conjugal pastimes with His consort Radha by making Her play the dominant role. The address to Him is 'Oh Rama!'

Rama: Again, Krishna enjoys such intimate conjugal pastimes. The address to Him is 'Oh Rama!'

Hare: On leaving after enjoying conjugal pastimes, She causes Sri Krishna's mind to be forcibly attracted in Her pursuit. The address to Her is 'Oh Hare!'

Hare: Similarly, Sri Krishna is who, on leaving the conjugal arena, captures Radhika's mind in loving separation.

The address for Krishna here is 'Oh Hare!'

SRILA PRABHUPADA'S INSTRUCTIONS ON HOLY NAME

1. Simply taking to residing in the Holy Dham of Mathura, or keeping the association of the saintly persons will not bear the desired effect. On the other hand, just the chanting of the holy names of Sri Krishna will ensure the fruits of residence in Mathura, association of the holy, worshipping the deity with faith, and listening to the holy *Bhagavata*. The chanting of the holy name will ensue all perfections for the living entity.

2. The bliss of chanting the Holy Name leads to hearing and opportunities to hear. At that time, one gradually becomes qualified to practice remembering the *asta-kaliya* pastimes of the Lord.
3. One should never lose hope in spite of being assailed by wicked thoughts during the chanting of the Holy Name, all these thoughts will slowly cease upon being fixed to the chanting of the Holy Name. Conversely, in not showing enthusiasm for the process of chanting of the Holy Name how will the materialistic thoughts ever cease?
4. In order to establish communion with the Supreme Lord there is no other way except through the medium of the ear. Unfortunately, I have no other wealth to bestow to you except this Holy Name. Newcomers may have to take to solitary devotions to chant the name of Krishna whereby one relinquishes all association not congenial to devotion. However, in attaining the qualification to chant the Holy Name properly, association with others will cease to be a stumbling block. In short, even the ignorant can attain to successful chanting of the Holy Name by the mercy of the pure devotees.
5. Solitary devotions (*bhajan*) refer to devotion conducted in the place that is devoid of the sublime presence of the Lord and His confidential devotees. Therefore, the art of practicing devotion to the Supreme Lord is through the media of His pure devotee in absolute obedience.
6. The present sufferings which one seems to be undergoing in this body due to the reactions of one's previous work should be seen in the light of the Lord's compassion for our upliftment. Therefore, giving up lethargy and pessimism, one should surrender whole-heartedly to the lotus feet of the spiritual master, devotees, and the Supreme Lord.

7. The end of all knowledge and study is the chanting of the holy name of the Lord. The function of the compassionate preachers is to change the natural perverted tastes of ordinary living entities towards devotional service of the Lord.
8. If one can be able to save at least one soul from the stronghold of the fortress of the material energy than this is innumerable times greater and true service to others than the building of millions of hospitals.
9. The devotees are of the opinion that without the will of the Lord nobody can perform anything. The object of our highest aspirations is to be the dust of the lotus feet of unalloyed followers of Sri Rupa Goswami. The highest religion is to serve the pure residents of Vraja.
10. The best way of overcoming the material energy is the association of the saintly and chanting the holy name of Sri Krishna. To the extent one is attracted to the Holy Name, to that same measure he is to be understood as a devotee (*vaishnava*).
11. One who chants the holy name of the Lord being freed from offences will very quickly attain love of Godhead.

The word *aparadha* can be broken to the syllables 'apa' (give up) and 'radha' (to please) or the word 'namaparadha' together literally means to cause displeasure to the Holy Name.

TEN OFFENCES AGAINST THE HOLY NAME

1. To blaspheme the devotees who are engaged in the preaching of the holy name of the Lord.
2. To consider the names of demigods like Lord Siva to be equal and independent of Lord Vishnu.
3. To commit offences against the spiritual master.

4. To commit blasphemy against the holy scriptures.
5. To consider the glories of the Name to be exaggeration.
6. To think of the glories of the Holy Name as imagination.
7. To commit sinful activities on the strength of the Holy Name.
8. To consider the veritable touchstone in the form of the Name to be equal to pious works such as austerity, gifts, etc.
9. To instruct the faithless on the chanting of the Holy Name.
10. Even after hearing the glories of the holy name to still retain one's selfish attitude of 'me' and 'mine'.

*nama bina kalikale nahi ara dhanna
sarva sastrasara nama -ei sastra marma*

In the ages of Satya, Treta, and Dwapara the process of obedience to the scriptural injunctions was the order of those days but later by the influence of the dark age of Kali, mentally concocted or speculative philosophies deviant from the real verdict of the scriptures, came into play being dominated especially by that knowledge acquired through the medium of the external senses. The name of Krishna and His absolute form is non-different. The Supreme Lord is eternal, pure, liberated, the form of Supreme consciousness and the transcendental touchstone being able to fulfill the wishes of all. Similarly, the Holy Name is equally of that category and being in essence spiritual, it is different from ordinary names and in all aspects not under the jurisdiction of speculative thinking. One can be freed from all designations in the form of the gross and subtle bodies solely by the process of the chanting of the Holy Name.

For that reason, in the present age the increasing intensity of various types of speculative religions are all restricted in the sense that they have no access to the Holy Name. Only the real religion which is the chanting of the Holy Name being the

essence of all the mantras and completely transcendental can be able to protect us from the normal sense gratificatory propensities. Material names, form, and qualities are all under the domain of speculative religion while the transcendental paraphernalia relates to the name, form, qualities of the Supreme Lord, Himself. The impersonalists ignorantly differentiate between the name, form and qualities of the Lord and ultimately fall down from their position because of such an offense. In this respect their main slogans like '*sarvam khalvedam brahma*', and '*sadaiva saumyetedam agra*' help to relieve them in one sense from their material conceptions. Therefore, without resorting to the shelter of the Holy Name one can never be relieved from the whimsical or material condition of life.

SRI NAMA MAHATMYA

*om asya jananto nama cidvivaktan mahaste
visnoh sumatim bhajamahe. om tat sad iti.*

(Rig-Veda)

'Oh Visnu! Your name is the form of transcendence emanating from You in person. Therefore, even in not understanding the glories of Your holy name completely, if one makes an attempt to chant these holy syllables again and again then that will surely ensure the attainment of devotional knowledge, merely by the fact that the holy name consisting of transcendental syllables is naturally self-illuminating.'

Even in cases of extreme fear or enmity to the Supreme Lord if one chants the Holy Name, then in that state one will attain liberation due to chanting the shadow name (clearing state of offences) in *sanketya* or negligence.

In Dwapara Age, the denizens used to worship the Supreme Lord by the method of *Pancharatra*, or worship by rules and regulations according to the relevant scriptures. However, in Kali Yuga Lord Hari is solely worshipped by the chanting of the Holy Name. In this regard while the mantras in relation with Krishna

can give liberation, chanting the holy name of Krishna can award proximity to Sri Krishna.

TEACHINGS OF MAHAPRABHU

*prabhu kahe kahilam ei mahamantra
iha japa giya sabe kariya nirbandha
iha hoite sarvasiddhi hoibe sabara
sarva khana bala ithe viddhi nahi ara
nama bina kalikale nahi ara dharma
sarvamantra-sara nama ei sastra -marma
yadi ama prati sneha thake sabakara
tabe krishna vyatirikta na gaibe ara
sadhya-sadhantattva ye kichu sakala
harinama-sankirtane milibe sakala*

(Caitanya Bhagavat M.23.74-78)

Sriman Mahaprabhu directs us all to, "Chant the holy name of the Lord with fixed determination by rigidly keeping the scheduled count of the Holy Names and stressing that by doing so will be sufficient to award us all perfections. His main injunction is to constantly chant the Holy name without any interruption for there is no other rule in regard to this. The purport of all scriptures is that in the age of Kali there is no other way except for the Holy Name and it is to be included as both the means of self-realization as well as the goal."

Sriman Mahaprabhu concludes by saying that those who adore Him should only sing continually the glories of Sri Krishna without recourse to anything else.

*sankirtana hoite papa-samsara-nasana
citta-suddhi sarva bhakti sadhana- udgama
krishnapremodgama premamrta-aswadana
krishnaprapti,sevamrta-samudre majjan
yerupe loile nama prema upajaya
tara laksana sloka suno svarupa rama-raya*

(Caitanya Charitamrita A.20/13-20)

"The effects of the Holy Name will give rise to the eradica-

tion of sinful activities of the past and the present material consciousness will be dissipated and steadily as the mind and heart become purified, one becomes qualified to continue up to spontaneous devotional practices. Finally, those practices will take one to the attainment of love of Krishna enabling one to taste that nectarine consciousness of loving reciprocative service with Sri Krishna Himself."

However, in order to come to that platform one has to abide faithfully to the instructions of Srīman Mahāprabhu especially this third verse of *Sikshastaka*.

This verse stresses that in order to chant the Holy Name one should be more humble than the straw in the street, more tolerant than the tree, give all respect to others while at the same time not expect honor from others.

*uttama hoiya apanake mane tmadhama
 dui prakare sahishnuta kare vrksa sama
 vrksa yena katileha kichu na bolaya
 sukaya maileha kare pani na magaya
 'yei ye magaye tare deya apana-dhana
 gharma vrsti sahe anera karaye raksan
 uttama hoiya vaishnava habe nirabhimana
 jive samman dibe jani krishna adhisthana
 eimata hoiya yei krishna nama laya
 sri-krishna carane tara prema upajaya
 (Caitanya-caritamṛta Antya, 20. 21-26)*

"Even though the pure devotee is on the highest platform, still he considers himself lower than the straw in the street. Similar to the tree he is forbearing in two ways. The tree does not protest at the time of being cut and on the verge of being dried up does not ask for water. However, it will afford its leaves or fruits to those who solicit it. Again, while tolerating extreme heat and rain likewise it provides protection to others from the same very hardships. Similarly, the devotee though free from all material desires is ready to give everything to others.

The main quality of such a high-class devotee is that he is free from all types of false prestige and respects all, understanding that Krishna is present in all of their hearts. Such intelligent devotees who can chant the Holy Name in this frame of mind will finally attain love of Krishna. The chanting of the Holy Name is the only method in this age of Kali for the worship of the Lord by which one will be able to obtain His mercy."

In the commentary of the above verses '*kirtanam*' is defined as the loud chanting of the name, form, qualities and pastimes of the Lord. However, '*sankirtanam*' refer to when many people congregate to chant the name, form, and pastimes of the Supreme Lord. On the other hand *japa* means to chant the Holy Name with heart-felt emotion. This *japa* can be divided into three categories which are loud chanting, chanting with merely the lips, and thirdly by remembrance of the Name in the mind. The word '*nirbandha*' is used to mean or repeated endeavours.

*bhajanera madhye srestha nava-viddha bhakti or
tara madhye sarva-srestha nama sankirtan*

(*Caitanya-caritamṛta*, Antya, 4/23)

"Of all the limbs of devotion the nine fold practice of devotion is most superior. Amongst these the method of devotions by the process of congregational chanting is the most superior."

This process of chanting, done in an inoffensive manner will ultimately be able to give one love of Godhead. In comparison with the chanting of the Holy Name, all the other eight limbs of devotional practice are secondary or in other words all other limbs have to be necessarily coupled with the chanting of the Holy Name in order to be successful. The Holy Name is itself independent of all other processes. The pastime of the cleaning of the Gundicha temple illustrates comparatively the way one has to thoroughly purify one's mind. Sriman Mahaprabhu had then instigated all to take the Holy Name continuously while performing the cleaning of the temple.

sevonmukhe hi jihvadau svayameva sphuratyadah

"By the method of engaging the purified senses beginning

with the tongue as in the chanting of the Holy Name etc. will gradually enable one to realize the transcendental form of the Lord."

In the commentary of Sri Sanatan Goswami in *Brhat Bhagavatamritam* it is stated that the main process of worshipping the Lord is the chanting of the Holy Name. In this regard, of all the different types of *kirtanam*, the chanting of the Holy Name is considered the most superior. Usually, in the general context, 'kirtanam' includes the study of the Vedas, religious discourse, devotional songs and devotional eulogies to the Supreme Lord but out of all these, importance is given primarily to the chanting of the holy name. The chanting of the holy name of Krishna will quickly award one love of Sri Krishna being totally independent of all the other processes in order to ensure results. No other devotional limb can compare with the chanting of the Name. The method of chanting the Holy Name with the tongue is the legacy both in precept and practice that Srīman Mahāprabhu had given. One should not lose hope in spite of the presence of offences, for by practicing this chanting steadily in an uninterrupted manner, will cause all offences to fade.

avisranta name nama aparadha jaya
 tahe aparadha kabhu sthana nahi paya
 bolo krsna, bhajo krsna, gaowa krsna- nama
 krsna binu keho kichu na bhaviha ana
 ki bhojane, ki sayane kiba jagarane
 ahar nisa chinta krsna boloha vadane
 gramyakatha na sunibe, gramyavarta na kahibe
 bhalo na khaibe ara bhalo na pariibe
 amani manada hoyā krsnanama sada labe
 vraja radha-krsna seva manase karibe

(Caitanya Bhagavata, Madhya, 28.25-30)

Note: Offences are categorized into offences against the Deity, the Holy Name, Vaisnavas and towards the living entities.

In *Chaitanya Bhagavata* it is mentioned that, "Unfailing continued practice of chanting the Holy Name will enable all of one's offences to be dissipated. It is enjoined here that one

should always chant and sing the name of Krishna, worship Krishna and not hear anything other than regarding Him alone. One should chant the name of Krishna with one's mouth both in eating, sleeping or in the awakened state. One should not listen to village gossip or mundane conversation, engage in such gossip nor for that matter be inclined to savor dainty dishes or attempt to wear fancy cloth in the process of *nama bhajan*. The highest method of devotion is to always perform mentally (internally) the transcendental service of Krishna while externally chanting the holy name of the Lord in a humble state of mind."

In this respect, some people are of the opinion that remembrance is mandatory in conjunction with '*bhajan*' but remembrance is secondary in respect to the chanting of the Holy Name.

*sri dayita das, kirtanete asa,
kara uccayhsware harinama roba,
kirtan prabhava, smaran hoibe,
sei kale nirjana bhajana sambhava*

In the above verses Srila Prabupada advocates the loud chanting of the holy name in complete surrender in pursuit of cultivation of name enabling one to ultimately come to the platform of actually qualifying chanting in solicitude (spontaneous devotion). Srila Rupa Goswami states:

*syat krishnamacaritadi sitapyavidya-
pittopatapta-rasanasya na rochika nu
kintvadaradanudinam khalu saiva justa
svadvikramadbhavati tadgadamlahantri*

"Oh Master! Those whose tongues are afflicted with ignorance (jaundice of material consciousness) for them especially the nectarine (as sugar candy) holy names of Krishna will not seem relishable but if this medicine in the form of these nectarine names is steadily adhered to, then gradually the disease of this material consciousness will be dissipated enabling one to finally relish the sweetness of the Name."

*tan nama rupa-caritadi sukirtana-anu-
smrtyoh kramena rasanamanasi niyojya
tistan vraje tad-anuragi jana-anugami
kalam nayed-akhilam ity upadesa-saram
(refer Upadeshamṛta 7-8)*

"One should reside in Vraja and gradually forgo everything else step by step, while uninterruptedly chanting, hearing, and remembering the blissful name, form, qualities and pastimes of the Supreme Lord in unalloyed obedience to the pure devotees of Vraja."

THE METHOD OF CHANTING OF THE HOLY NAME

*hare kṛṣṇatocchaih sphuritarasano namaganana
kṛta-granthisreni-subhagakati-sutrajjalakarah
visalakṣya dirghagalayugalukhelanchitabhujah
sa caitanya kim me punarapi dṛṣṭoryasyati padam*

"When will I be able to receive the vision of Sri Chaitanyadev, who has two large lotus eyes and two long flowing arms, whose tongue is ever loudly chanting the holy name of Sri Krishna and whose left hand is simultaneously engaged in keeping the scheduled count on the tally beads." (Chaitanyastakam - Rupa Goswami)

*nijatve gaudiyan jagati parigrhya prabhuriman harekṛṣṇetyevam
gananaavidhina kirtayata bhoh
itiprayam siksam janaka haiva tebhyam paridisan sacisunum kim
me nayanasaranim yasyati punah*

Similarly, Srila Raghunath Das Goswami has written a verse, which goes in the same manner:

"When will Sachinandana Gaurahari be the object of my vision? He has accepted his loving followers (gaudiyan) while instructing them both on the efficacy of the loud chanting of the holy name 'Hare Krishna' as well as with keeping the scheduled count of the Holy Names."

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur has given the following advice:

*jivan anitya janaha sara; tahe nanavidha vipada bhara
namasraya kari yatane tumi thakaha apana kaje*

"In this fleeting and temporary material world beset with all kinds of impediments, one should strive in his allotted duties with all the strength he can muster and at the same time vigilantly chant the holy name of the Lord. In other words, from now on one has to be determined in performing *nama bhajan* and in the course of time a day will come when his lips will automatically keep uttering the name of the Lord."

In his book *Harinama Chintamani*, one is advised to increase the chanting of the Holy Name undauntedly as that is the only existing antidote against all offences to the Name.

SRILA PRABHUPADA'S MAIN SLOGANS ON THE HOLY NAME

1. The Gaudiya Math lives by the slogan 'All Glories to the chanting of the Holy Name' To give the living entities the wealth of devotional service in the form of chanting the holy name of the Lord is the highest form of welfare work.
2. Devotion to the Lord means the faithful chanting of the Holy Name of Sri Krishna.
3. Our real sincere attempt at devotional service is the verse '*kirtaniyah sada harih*' which means to take shelter of the Holy Name by chanting continually with determination. In this regard all attempts to cultivate qualities such as humility, tolerance and giving respects to others are of invaluable help towards the proper chanting of the Name.
4. All those in the shelter of the Gaudiya Math should make an effort to chant one lakh of Holy Names daily otherwise different types of attachments may creep in one's heart

causing one's devotional service to be hampered. In fact, the Lord does not accept the food offerings of one who does not maintain his schedule of chanting the prescribed one lakh of Holy Names.

5. Those who are confused about the meaning of *bhajan* neglect this process of chanting one lakh Names and try to endeavour in other types of spiritual practices but will be defeated and can never achieve any success or mercy.
6. One should balance his time so that one lakh of holy names can also be chanted inclusive of other allotted duties.

Final Note

The method of taking the Name involves meditating on the actual form and meaning of the syllables of the mantra with absorption, together with crying for the Lord in a manner free from all duplicity. The destruction of ignorance which is the root cause of all maladies will result in uninterrupted rigid cultivation of the Holy Name.

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur



Mangala Carana

om ajñāna timirāndasya jñānānjana śalākaya
cakṣur unmilitaṁ yena tasmai śrī gurave namaḥ

"I offer my respectful obeisances unto my spiritual master, who has opened my eyes which were blinded by the darkness of ignorance, with the torchlight of knowledge".

namaḥ om viṣṇu pādāya gaura preṣṭhāya bhutale
śrīmad bhakti promodāya puri gosvami nāmine

"I pay my humble obeisances to Om Vishnupada His Divine Grace Srila Promode Puri Goswami Maharaja who is very dear to Lord Gauranga".

divya jñāna pradātre ca prabhāve janma-janmani
jñāna vairāgya dehāya śāstra siddhānta saṁvide

"He is able to enlighten the disciple with transcendental knowledge by dint of births of spiritual practice. By nature he exhibits complete detachment and self-realization and is well-versed in the conclusions of all revealed scriptures".

patitānāṁ samuddāre yativeśa dhāraye vai
pracarācāra kārye ca jāgurukāya sarvadā

"To deliver the fallen souls, he has taken the ochre dress of a mendicant. He is a world teacher both by preaching and personal example".

yatho uddhavyākumārād bhagavad arcane ratiḥ
vaisnavānāṁ sarvakṛtya dakṣatā paramā tathā

"Even from his childhood he manifested a great devotion to steadfast worship of the Deity, like Uddhava. In all devotional works, he exhibits great skill and dexterity".

